THE

HISTORY

OF

RELIGION:

PARTICULARLY OF THE

Principal Denominations of CHRISTIANS,

VIZ.

Of the Church of Rome,
——— England,
——— Scotland,
——— Nonjurors,
——— Lutherans,
——— Presbyterians,

Of the Independents,
——— Baptists in general,
——— Quakers,
——— Antinomians,
——— Moravians,
——— Methodists in general.

CONTAINING

A succinct and genuine Account of their original and present CONSTITUTION, DISCIPLINE, DOCTRINES, WORSHIP, and CEREMONIES: With a general Account of the various Sectaries of less Note, since the first Establishment of Christianity.

Including a general History of the REFORMATION, and so much of Civil and Ecclesiastical History as is connected with, or necessary to explain and illustrate the WORK.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A DICTIONARY of the principal Religious ORDERS, OFFICES, DAYS, RITES, CUSTOMS, HABITS, and CHARACTERS; the most important TRANSACTIONS of Ecclesiastical COUNCILS, SYNODS, &c. explaining all such ambiguous Words and Phrases as have a proper Connexion with the Subjects of this History.

By an IMPARTIAL HAND.

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THE PREFACE.

TO improve the Understanding in any Branch of useful Knowledge, has ever been esteemed a laudable Pursuit; and every Attempt to facilitate the Propagation of Knowledge, in Proportion to the Nature and Importance of the Subject, and the Propriety of the Method, will, it is presumed, meet with Approbation and Encouragement.

To obtain a Skill in the Sciences is, indeed, the Business and Profession only of a few Men of distinguished Abilities; but there are many who have Capacity and Leisure to improve and enrich their Minds in various Branches of Knowledge; even the lower Order of Men have particular Callings and Concerns in Life, in which it behoves them to employ their Reason in the Use of proper Helps for their Improvement.

The common Duties and Benefits of Society, which interest every Man living, as he is a social Creature; even our particular and necessary Relations to a Family, a Neighbourhood, or Government, oblige all Persons to exercise their reasoning Powers in a Variety of Cases, before they can come

to a prudent discreet Determination, and avoid those Errors which would naturally be attended with unhappy Consequences.

But every Man has a more important Concern in the Affairs of a Life to come; and therefore it is a Matter of the highest Moment for every one to understand, to reason, and to determine justly about the Things of Religion: 'Tis in vain for Persons in general to say, We have no Leisure or Time; when the daily Intervals and Vacancies from necessary Labour, together with the One Day in Seven, in the Christian World, allow a sufficient Time for such Pursuits: And if Men would but apply themselves hereto, with half as much Zeal and Diligence as they do to the Trifles and Amusements of this Life, it would turn to infinitely better Account.

But, besides the right Knowledge of those Principles and Duties which are of the greatest Concernment, there are some Branches of Study, which have a most apparent Tendency to entertain as well as to improve; and, of this Kind, some Subjects of History will claim the Preference; and, perhaps, there is no Part of History better received than the Account of great Changes and Revolutions in States and Governments.

Of all Changes, those in Religion which have been sudden and signal, are enquired into with the most eager Curiosity; and, where the Salvation of Souls has been chiefly aimed at, and the Credit, Honour and Interest of Churches promoted and established, the more Pious and Judicious will find their Satisfaction much more than compensate the seeming Trouble of their Search into the Reality and Circumstances thereof.

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The Alteration that has been made in the eſtabliſhed Religion of this Nation for little more than the two laſt Centuries, has produced ſuch Effects every where, that it is no Wonder if all Perſons deſire to ſee a clear Account of the ſeveral Steps by which it advanced; of the Councils that directed it, and the Motives, both religious and political, that inclined Men of all Conditions to concur in it.

To lay before the Public a particular and impartial Account of the Conſtitution and Doctrine of the ſeveral Denominations of Chriſtians, is the principal Intent of this Undertaking; and, upon the moſt mature Enquiry I have been able to make, I find the Doctrines and Tenets of all Denominations to have varied greatly from their original Conſtitution, and diſtinguiſhing Character.

This Obſervation will appear to be true, even with reſpect to the *Roman Catholic* Church, which has been moſt of all ſolicitous to preſerve the *Catholic* Faith, as they call it, pure and uncorrupt. The wiſer Part diſclaim ſome of their moſt abſurd Doctrines, and diſcard and deſpiſe many of their ridiculous Ceremonies: Some Reformation has been made in theſe Reſpects by Churches of that Perſuaſion in different Nations of *Europe*; and it is more than probable that many of the moſt ſerious and judicious Papiſts would be glad to ſee a greater Reformation even in the Fundamentals of their Religion.

Picart, under the Article of adoring the Croſs, ſays, "This Ceremony gives great Scandal to *Heretics*, who look upon this ſolemn Adoration on Good Friday as manifeſt Idolatry—would it not be better to decline ſome Ceremonies which *Catholics* are reduced to Shifts, Diſguiſes, and Evaſions

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to defend, and which are looked on as Folly to the Libertine, and a Scandal to the Proteſtant?"*

In the Church of *England* it is well known great Alterations have taken place ſince the Reformation: At that Time the generality of the *Engliſh* Divines, eſpecially the Majority of the Committee for Compiling the Articles of this Church, were ſtrict or rigid Calviniſts, who, in Spite of all the Oppoſition they met with, modelled ſeveral of the Articles in Favour of Calviniſm, which now the greateſt Part of the *Engliſh* Divines would fain explain contrary to their literal Senſe and Meaning; repreſent them as, at beſt, ambiguous and capable of a Senſe more conſiſtent with the general Tenour of the Scriptures, and the Reaſon and common Senſe of Mankind.—In like Manner *Athanaſius*'s Creed was then, by Authority, inſerted in the Book of Common Prayer, and, with all the incomprehenſible Myſteries and exceptionable Clauſes, cordially received by ſome, and impoſed on others, as the true *Catholic* Faith; whereas now, to ſay no more to explode it, the Church in general "would be glad to be well rid of it." If the Queſtion were aſked, What are the genuine Sentiments of the Church of *England*? it would be a very vague, indeterminate and falſe Anſwer, to ſay they are contained in the XXXIX Articles; when it is well known that the Majority of our moſt eminent Prelates and Divines of the eſtabliſhed Church, have embraced and profeſſed, and in their public Preaching and Writings endeavour to inculcate, Principles more conſiſtent with the Nature of genuine Chriſtianity.

The ſame Obſervation is equally true, with reſpect to many other Denominations, namely the Kirk

* *Picart*'s Edition of the *Religious Ceremonies*, Vol. II. P. 25.

Kirk or Church of *Scotland*, the *Engliſh Preſbyterians*, *Baptiſts*, *Quakers*, *&c.* as would be no difficult Matter to particularize in many Inſtances, were it not unneceſſary, as will evidently appear in the Courſe of this Work.

This may be one Reaſon why all the Hiſtories extant, of the ſeveral Sectaries of Chriſtians, differ ſo widely from each other, and are ſo very imperfect and erroneous: I wiſh this was the only Reaſon, and that there did not appear ſome evident Marks of a malevolent Deſign to miſrepreſent Sectaries, in order to expoſe them to Cenſure and Contempt. This I hint with particular Regard to *Roſs*'s View of all Religions, being, of all others, the moſt ſcurrilous and falſe; and to that voluminous Edition of the Religious Ceremonies of all Nations, in which the Author appears greatly miſtaken in the Conſtitution and Principles of ſeveral Societies of *Engliſh Proteſtant Diſſenters*; and alſo to *Boſſuet*'s Hiſtory of the Variation of *Proteſtant* Churches in the *Low Countries*.

But this Crime of Miſrepreſentation is not applicable only to a few Hiſtories of our own or foreign Nations, and thoſe for the moſt part obſolete: Certain modern Writers ſeem to have taken a ſecret Pleaſure in blackening the Characters of ſome Societies of Chriſtians, and expoſing and cenſuring ſuch Doctrines or Rites as they learned not in their Infancy to believe or practiſe; forgetting, though aſhamed to deny, the Right of private Judgment, and Liberty of Conſcience; and too often ignorant of the genuine Principles of thoſe Societies they cenſure, and of the Arguments upon which they are founded. Indeed I have been often ſurprized to find Perſons

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of Credit, and otherwiſe of good Underſtanding, ſo extremely ignorant, not only with reſpect to the genuine Sentiments of other Denominations of Chriſtians; but in a very high Degree, of the diſtinguiſhing Tenets or Principles of that Religion they themſelves profeſs; and conſequently of the Arguments on which they reſt. This was one Motive to the Proſecution of the preſent Work; and another was to ſuppreſs Bigotry, Prejudice, and Cenſorioufneſs, too apt to take Poſſeſſion of narrow Minds; and, in their Place, to inculcate and improve that mutual Love and Charity, even for Perſons of differing Opinions, which is ſo agreeable to the Dignity and Honour of Men and of Chriſtians.

I write for no Party; my Aim is to recommend a free and impartial Enquiry into the genuine Principles of Chriſtianity, which is the juſt Foundation of Truth and Virtue, Liberty and Charity.

That generally-received Maxim, *Rome was not built in a Day*, is as undoubtedly true with reſpect to the Conſtitution, Doctrine and Ceremonies of the *Romiſh* Church, as of its external Form and ſtately Edifices; for this Reaſon I have judged a brief Account of the principal Revolutions and Variations in the Government, Worſhip, *&c.* of that Church for ſeventeen Centuries, a proper Preliminary to the Hiſtory of its preſent State.

The Account I have given of the Principles, *&c.* of the *Romiſh* Church, I have firſt expreſſed in the Words of Pope *Pius*'s Creed, which was eſtabliſhed by the Council of *Trent*, and has been ever ſince

eſteemed by the Votaries of that Church, of the greateſt Authority. I have likewiſe endeavoured to explain or aſcertain their true Senſe; from Authors of their own, well approved of by that Church, and whoſe Books have been licenſed by public Authority; diſclaiming and carefully avoiding, as much as poſſible, the fallacious Gloſſes, and artful Diſguiſes of deſigning Prieſts on the one Hand, and the Miſapprehenſions of the Vulgar on the other. For this Purpoſe I have conſulted the moſt valuable Hiſtories of that Church, their Conſtitution, Doctrine and Ceremonies publiſhed at that remarkable Period, when the Controverſy ſubſiſted between many of our eminent Prelates and of their Prieſts and Cardinals from the Year 1682 to 1688, incluſive.

I have alſo made ſeveral Extracts from Dr. *Middleton*'s Letters from *Rome*, wherein he has ſhewn, (conformable to ſeveral other Authors) that many of the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Romiſh* Church were of Heathen original, and deſtitute of ſuperior Authority for their Practice: In theſe Extracts, I have not thought it neceſſary to Change his Language, to avoid the Reprehenſion of thoſe Sentiments and Ceremonies; nor have I allowed myſelf to exclaim or to detail out ſuch Invectives as are too generally uſed, but have no proper and natural Tendency to convince the *Papiſt*, or confirm the *Proteſtant*.—— If I have given any Scope to Cenſure, it is in the Article of Perſecution, where it was impoſſible, after reading ſo many tragical Accounts of the horrid Cruelties of the *Inquiſition*, and other inhuman Executions, to be impartial and honeſt without expreſſing the utmoſt Abhorrence and Deteſtation of ſuch Practices, and the Principles that led to them; a ſuperficial Mention of which, will alarm every true *Proteſtant* who has ever conſidered

the Value of civil and religious Liberty and knows how to prize them. — With Reſpect to other Sentiments and Practices that are unſcriptural and merely of human Invention, I am ſorry to ſee, in the Defences of Popery, how much they are founded upon the Authority of ancient Fathers, and that they are ſo often ſhewn to be conſonant with ſome former Practices of our eſtabliſhed Church; with certain of the Canons, Articles, and Liturgy; which may fully convince us, that moſt of the Exceptionable Parts of our Articles and Liturgy aroſe from the undue Veneration which the Compilers of them paid to the Fathers St. *Auguſtine*, St. *Cyprian*, St. *Ambroſe*, *&c.* and likewiſe ſufficiently demonſtrate to the impartial Reader, that *Antiquity is a wretched Guide to a Searcher after Truth; and that human Formularies of Faith are a chief Obſtacle to real Knowledge.*

As to the political Views, baſe Artifices, and Exactions of the *Romiſh* Prieſts, too much of it will appear in the Courſe of this Hiſtory: An impartial Mention of them is in Fact to explode them: Particularly in the Hiſtory of the State of Religion in *Great Britain*, from the firſt planting of Chriſtianity, at the latter End of the VIth and Beginning of the VIIth Century, to the Middle of the XIVth Century, when *Wickliffe* made ſome Efforts towards a Reformation. The Reader will find many remarkable Occurrences, in Reſpect to the Incroachments of the Church of *Rome* on the Prerogatives of the *Britiſh* Kings, and the common Rights of their Subjects, as well as by the groſs Corruptions of the original Purity and Simplicity of Chriſtianity, as muſt ever be deemed peculiar Incentives to the *Engliſh* Nation, to throw off that

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Yoke if poſſible, and purſue a Reformation in earneſt——and at the ſame Time, he will obſerve ſuch Difficulties attending it, as muſt give us an high Opinion of our principal Reformers, and lead us to value our Liberties both civil and religious.

In the Hiſtory of the Reformation abroad and at home, and of the State of Religion, more eſpecially in the eſtabliſhed Church, and from that remarkable Period to the Revolution, I muſt own I have much exceeded my intended Limits; but when I conſidered, the neceſſary Connection between the Reformation in the *Low Countries*, *France*, and in *England*, the many intereſting Circumſtances that occurred, in which our principal Reformers were exhibited to View (which indeed deſerve to be ever preſerved, and handed down to lateſt Poſterity) and which I doubt not will be peruſed by many, with Pleaſure and Improvement, I was not willing to omit them.

Having mentioned *Wickliffe* as the *Morning Star* of the Reformation, I have likewiſe given a general Hiſtory of the Period in which he lived, to the Reign of King *Henry* the VIIIth, the reputed Time when Proteſtantiſm took its Riſe: In this Interval I have found many Circumſtances of an intereſting Nature relative to the neceſſity of a Reformation, the Difficulties attending it, and likewiſe of incidental Occurrences contributing thereto, which, at Length, made it riſe ſuperior to Oppoſition. How far the Reformation was intended or effected by King *Henry* VIII, is a Point in which even critical Hiſtorians are much divided: I have therefore ſought the Materials of this difficult Part of my Hiſtory, from ancient MSS, as well as modern Tracts; and I have been ſomewhat more diffuſe in

this Part, as I have ſelected from two MSS, his Profeſſion of Faith wrote in 1536, and *Memoirs of his Character*, compiled much about the ſame Time.

My next Province is to give a Hiſtory of the State of Religion in the ſucceſſive Reigns, down to the preſent Time, in which I have been careful to introduce whatever has been ſignal and intereſting, either in the eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory of the eſtabliſhed Church, or of ſuch remarkable Tranſactions and Revolutions, in the civil Hiſtory of this Nation, as are connected with it for more than two Hundred Years, and as the prevailing Opinions and Parties, gave Riſe at different Times, to a Variety of Tranſactions in Council, in Parliament, and eccleſiaſtic Convocations, ſome of a remarkable intereſting Nature, I thought them the proper Subjects of ſuch an Hiſtory: But as many of them are peculiar to different Denominations, that Part of them I have inſerted in the reſpective Hiſtory of thoſe Sects, and what properly relate to the eccleſiaſtical Polity and Government of the Church of *England*, comes under that Head.

In the Proſecution of this Part, I have attempted ſome Account of the Princes, and moſt eminent Prelates and Divines, whoſe Lives and Writings have done Honour to the Chriſtian Proteſtant Church, and alſo of ſuch as have attempted to ſap the Foundation of Truth, Liberty and Virtue.

In treating of the Articles of the Church of *England*, I have firſt given them in the eſtabliſhed Form, contained in the Book of Common Prayer; I have then endeavoured to give their true Senſe, from ſundry of the moſt approved Expoſitions of thoſe Articles, by ſome diſtinguiſhed Prelates of

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our Church, and other Divines of Note, and generally by Extracts in their own Words; ſave where I have thought it might be more properly abridged, and in that Caſe I have given an Abſtract, with due Regard to the Senſe and Meaning of the Author, and of the Articles in their original Form, in a Senſe in which the more judicious Divines would recommend them to be underſtood.——Mr. *Welchman*, in his Expoſition of theſe Articles, pays a particular Regard to the Senſe of the ancient Fathers, St. *Auſtin*, St. *Chryſoſtom*, St. *Ignatius*, *Irenæus*, *&c.* and it appears that the Language and Sentiment contained in them, are in great Meaſure borrowed from the Writings of thoſe Lights of the primitive Church, which, by the Way, ſhews the great Veneration and Eſteem our firſt Compilers had for Antiquity; and very often to the Neglect of more certain, eſſential and important Rules and Principles of Judging, concerning the Truths of the ſacred Scriptures: But this is only a Hint; for I muſt declare that I have made it a general Rule, throughout the whole of this Work, to relate Facts and deſcribe Things as I found them, without attempting to animadvert thereon.

In repreſenting the Conſtitution and Doctrines of other Denominations of Chriſtians, I have made it my conſtant Rule to ſhew that I underſtood the Subject, and was under no undue Biaſs. Impartiality I eſteemed eſſentially recommendatory of this Work, and the beſt Apology I could make for whatever involuntary Errors and Imperfections might attend the Publication.

Throughout the Whole I have aimed at Conciſeneſs, as far as I judged would comport with the Plan I had in View, its Entertainment and Uſefulneſs; for

for I have characterized each Sect and explained their Doctrines, more eſpecially their peculiar Tenets, where I could, in their own Words.—— This Method will afford not a barely ſuperficial and partial Account of what may be the particular Sentiments of here and there a private Perſon and obſcure Society; but of the genuine Principles of that Body or Community, which is neceſſary to forming a juſt Idea of them; and whenever it has been neceſſary, I have had proper Information from Correſpondence, or given a perſonal Attendance at their Aſſemblies and taken Minutes, for greater certainty and Satisfaction.

Amongſt a Variety of Readers I cannot expect the Approbation of all. Some there are ſo extreamly indifferent, with reſpect to the principal Difference of Sentiment among Chriſtians, as plainly implies they have never made Religion their Study, or that their own Profeſſion is not the Effect of their Enquiry; but that they are governed in their Choice, by the Dictates of their Tutors, or the Sanction of Authority; and to ſuch, Popery would, probably, have been as agreeable as Proteſtantiſm, or Mahomedaniſm as Chriſtianity, if it had been their Lot to have been born in the Countries where theſe are eſtabliſhed. I ſhall leave them to enjoy their ſupine Indifference; but not without ſincerely congratulating my Countrymen, on our diſtinguiſhing Privilege, that we live in a Nation and at a Time, when Religion has in great Meaſure gained the Aſcendant over Superſtition; Truth in general prevailed againſt Darkneſs and Error, and Liberty, civil and religious, triumphed over Tyranny and Perſecution for Conſcience ſake: And for theſe I hope

hope we ſhall always find Patrons and Advocates, amongſt the more Learned and Judicious.

By ſome it has been ſuggeſted that this Work will be too dull and ſerious, and ſavour too much of the controverted Points of Religion; to ſuch I beg leave to obſerve, I have not often attempted to animadvert or expatiate on particular Opinions or Practices, that was not my Province; but to give a genuine Relation of ſuch Facts as appertain to the Hiſtory, and theſe are, I preſume, as well calculated to improve the Gentleman, and give Life and Spirit to Converſation, at proper Intervals, as any other Subjects more commonly introduced; and where ſuch a Variety of Facts, Circumſtances and Characters are introduced, I cannot apprehend it will be unentertaining or uſeleſs.

By attempting ſuch a Compendium of the religious Principles of particular Denominations, I imagined I might particularly adapt this Work to the peruſal of many young Perſons, and other well diſpoſed Chriſtians, who may not have Leiſure or Inclination to read many diſtinct Treatiſes, and it may anſwer a particular good Purpoſe, in regard to their Information and Improvement.

As this Work was not entered upon with any party Views, or proſecuted with Prejudice and Declamation, ſo it has been no haſty Production; it has been compiled at different Times, and by ſlow Degrees, in a Courſe of ſeveral Years; now and then, indeed, it ſpread itſelf into Branches, and Leaves, like a Plant in *April*, and ſometimes it lay by without Growth like a Vegetable in Winter; but it ſtill exiſted, and acquired its preſent Texture and Bulk according as Health, Leiſure, and other Advantages favoured the Undertaking.

Nor

Nor do I apprehend the Reader will look upon this as a prolix Hiſtory, when he conſiders not only the Extent of the Plan, but that many of the Hiſtories neceſſary to be conſulted are very voluminous; as *Euſebius*'s, *Dupin*'s, *Bingham*'s, and *Collier*'s eccleſiaſtical Hiſtories; *Richer*'s of Councils, Father *Paul*'s of that of *Trent*, *Picart*'s religious Ceremonies, and the Collections of Tracts for and againſt Popery, *Brandt*'s Hiſtory of the Reformation in the *Low Countries*, *Burnet*'s and many others, of the Reformation in *England*, and *Laval*'s of that in *France*; *Calderwood*'s, *Spotſwood*'s, and diverſe others of the Kirk of *Scotland*; *Sewel*'s of *Quakeriſm*; *Neal*'s of the *Puritans*, and *Croſby*'s of the *Engliſh Baptiſts*: Beſides a great Variety of Tracts on Points of Controverſy, Dictionaries, *&c.* that muſt be refered to, and conſulted, on ſuch a Number of Subjects; *Rapin*, *Hume*, *Smollet*, and other civil Hiſtorians of our own Nation, neceſſary for aſcertaining and illuſtrating all ſuch Matters, as have an immediate Connection with the principal Deſign of this Work. So that, upon the Whole, I may venture to ſay, it has been an arduous Taſk, the reſult of much Reading and Enquiry. But notwithſtanding the Aſſiſtance I have received, from ſo many eminent Hiſtorians, I have followed no Author any farther than I apprehended him to coincide with Truth.

After having been at all this Expence and Trouble to procure Materials and proper Helps for the Execution of my Plan, it is very probable and almoſt unavoidable, that many Things may have eſcaped my notice, which might have contributed to illuſtrate, confirm, or embelliſh the ſeveral Parts of it. I can only flatter myſelf that the Reader will find a ſufficient Number of Quotations to aſcertain the

the genuine Principles of the ſeveral Societies reſpectively, their Rites, Ceremonies, &c. of which I have given the following Hiſtory. And I hope the judicious Reader will look on it as no Dimunition of the Value of this Work, that many of the Ideas, as well as the Language, in which they are expreſſed, are borrowed from the Writings of the moſt eminent Divines of the eſtabliſhed Church, and other Denominations, eſpecially as, in many Inſtances, it was neceſſary for authenticating the Account I gave of the different Sectaries; and, very often, I found my Sentiments ſo happily expreſſed in them, that I preſumed from my own Approbation it would be moſt agreeable to my Readers.

I ſhall not urge as any Motive to this Work, that I apprehended Popery was gaining Ground in this Nation; but as that Religion is founded in Church Policy, and propagated with Artifice and Induſtry by their Prieſts, and is ſuited to captivate weak Minds, it cannot be unſeaſonable to point out ſome of their Evaſions, and to give a genuine Account of their Conſtitution, Doctrines, Ceremonies, &c. and this I judge will be ſufficient, if impartially repreſented, and attended to, to guard Proteſtants againſt the Corruption, Superſtition, and Cruelty of the *Roman Catholic* Religion.

Nor am I inclined to think a Spirit of Perſecution prevails among Proteſtants, or of uncharitably cenſuring Perſons for different Sentiments and Profeſſion: I wiſh, indeed, this was more evident; for I find ſome Authors ſuggeſt, that this Principle is far from being extinguiſhed, and that many rather want Opportunity than Inclination to perſecute, and inſtance the high Claims of the Church, which diſcovered themſelves in the *Bangorian* Controverſy;

I am, notwithſtanding, willing to hope a Love of Liberty prevails, and to promote it, I have attempted, in my Introduction, to vindicate the Right of private Judgment, and ſhew the Duty and the Advantages of free Enquiry, *&c.*

I rather think what is called *Methodiſm* and *Enthuſiaſm* prevails, to the Contempt of rational Religion; and, as I have taken Care to give a fair Account of their peculiar Tenets, I wiſh for nothing more than that the juſt Repreſentation of their Principles may have a proper Influence on the Minds of my Readers.

In the Courſe of this Hiſtory, I doubt not but it will appear, that the principal Differences amongſt the ſeveral Denominations of Proteſtant Churches, conſiſts not in any eſſential and fundamental Points, but in one or other of theſe particulars, *viz.* different Apprehenſions, with reſpect to the original Conſtitution and Government of the Chriſtian Church; different Sentiments with reſpect to ſome abſtruſe Points of Doctrine, in which the Eſſence of Religion does not, cannot conſiſt; or elſe their Difference reſpects the poſitive Inſtitutions, as to their Form and Manner, Importance or Inſignificance, or of certain Rites and Ceremonies of leſs Importance; and that notwithſtanding their Separation in Communion, and very often reproaching each other, they agree in the main eſſential Points of Religion, in "all ſuch Points as are abundantly ſufficient to preſerve the Knowledge and Practice of Religion in the World."*

Indeed many Attempts have been made, ſince the Reformation, and eſpecially ſince the Revolution, to reconcile Proteſtants; a Deſign which, however

* Biſhop of *London*'s *ſecond Paſtoral Letter*, printed in 1730.

however laudable, can never be effected with reſpect to Uniformity of Sentiment: The Cauſes of ſuch differing Principles, reſpecting Doctrine, Worſhip and Ceremonies, are ſo many and various, that we cannot hope for it, though, notwithſtanding the fond Attachment of many to their own Sects, the moſt impartial Enquiry convince us that *no Sect of Religion is free from juſt Exceptions.* There is ſcarce any Church in *Chriſtendom*, at this Day, that does not obtrude many Falſhoods, ſuch as muſt appear to any free Spirit, pure Contradictions; though delivered with the ſame Gravity, Authority and Importunity that they do the Holy Oracles of God.* And to the ſame Purpoſe a late ingenious Author obſerves,†

" Every Inſtitution or Syſtem of Religion, drawn up and adopted by Men, however it may claim a divine Original, with regard to the more important and eſſential Points, has always ſomething of Weakneſs and Imperfection that cleave to them, and will be apt, unleſs carefully guarded, to degenerate into one Extreme or the other.———What Species of Devotion ſo pure, noble and worthy the ſupreme Being, as that which is moſt ſpiritual, ſimple and unadorned, and which partakes leaſt of the Senſes or Imagination; and yet it is found, by Experience, that Modes of Worſhip, founded primarily on thoſe very Principles, do very naturally, among the Vulgar, mount up into Extravagance and Fanaticiſm; even many of the firſt Reformers have given Occaſion for this Kind of Reflection, which has been a real Diſparagement of their Zeal, though in the Event it proved in a very great Degree uſeful: It

* *More's Miſtery of Godlineſs*, Lib. 10. C. 2. §. 6.
† Mr. *Hume.*

partook ſtrongly of the enthuſiaſtic Genius, which a little more Mixture of Ceremony, Pomp and Ornament, may ſeem to correct the Abuſe of.——On the other Hand, a Religion attended with much of Ceremony and external Grandeur, has a very great Tendency to degenerate into Superſtition.——— The Church of *England* itſelf, which is, perhaps, the beſt Medium amongſt theſe Extremes, will be allowed, at leaſt during the Age, or in the Diſcharge of the public Offices of Religion, under Archbiſhop *Laud*, to have been ſomewhat tinctured with a Superſtition reſembling the Popiſh, and to have paid a higher Regard to ſome poſitive Inſtitutions, than the Nature of the Things ſtrictly ſpeaking would permit. It is the Buſineſs of an Hiſtorian to remark theſe Abuſes of all Kinds; but it belongs alſo to a prudent Reader, to confine the Repreſentations to that Age alone of which the Author treats.——— This would be of excellent Uſe to regulate our Ideas of ſeveral Sectaries; for it is a real Abſurdity to ſuppoſe that the *Preſbyterians*, *Independents*, *Baptiſts*, and other Sectaries of the preſent Age, partake of all the Extravagancies which we remark in thoſe who bore thoſe Appellations in the laſt Century."

It is very common for Hiſtorians, or other Writers, in general, to give an Account of the principal Authors who have treated on the ſame Subjects; and where this is done with Judgment and Impartiality, it has an apparent Uſefulneſs: And this is, in ſome Meaſure, neceſſary on my Part; though I will not in the leaſt attempt to raiſe the Credit of the preſent Hiſtory, by detracting from the Merits of others.——— Biſhop *Burnet* has characterized a Variety of Authors who have given us the Hiſtory

of

of the Church in general, or of the Reformation in particular, which I apprehend, without Flattery, may afford us ſome Rule of Judging concerning them: Speaking of ſome foreign Hiſtories, he ſays, "*Sleidan*, *Thuanus*, and Father *Paul*, are Authors of Credit and Impartiality, ſo far, at leaſt, as may be expected from Perſons of their Profeſſion, as Catholics.——*Sander*'s Hiſtory of the Reformation, inſtead of doing Honour to it, is replete with ſuch Calumnies and Falſhoods, as have tended to create Prejudices in the Minds of many, who have been weak enough to give Credit to it. *Fox*'s Hiſtory, is principally calculated to diſcover the Corruptions and Cruelties of the *Romiſh* Church; Lord *Herbert*'s Hiſtory is limited to the Reign of *Henry* VIII. and chiefly relates to civil Matters. *Fuller*, indeed, procured ſome few ſcarce Papers; but in general neither entertaining nor improving. ——Dr. *Heylin* wrote in a much ſuperior Method and Stile, but was ill informed, or too much biaſſed by Paſſion and Prejudice againſt ſome Perſons and Parties, who agitated Affairs at that Time; and in the hiſtorical Part produces few or no Vouchers for what he aſſerts. Some other of our Hiſtories are delivered with ſo much Alloy and Uncertainty, as has given Occaſion for the Advocates of the *Church* of *Rome* to diſparage the Reformation, as *begun by Luſt and Paſſion, conducted and carried on by Ambition, and confirmed by Policy.*"*

To eſtabliſh theſe Points, chiefly conſtitute the Subject of the Prefaces, the Introductions, or Appendixes, to ſeveral of thoſe Summaries and Defences of the *Roman Catholic Faith*, which have been

* See Biſhop *Burnet*'s Preface to his *Hiſtory of the Reformation.*

been ſo induſtriouſly diſperſed, in *Great Britain*, to Poiſon the Minds of Proteſtants.

Some very remarkable Productions of this Kind have come under my Notice: The *Appendix to the Profeſſion of Catholic Faith* contain ſundry Reaſons for diſavowing Proteſtantiſm, or the Reformation; though many of them ſo often repeated, and confuted, that one would imagine them too trifling to be propagated at this Time, when the Neceſſity of the Reformation, ſo far as it was effected, and the Expediency of carrying it much farther, has been ſo well defended. It conſiſts of the following Particulars, *viz.* that *Martin Luther*, and other Reformers, were Perſons of no Education; that they were Schiſmatics; the firſt Seeds of it ſown by the Devil; the Inſtruments, Men of worthleſs Characters, inſtanced in King *Henry* VIII; that it was propagated by Lay Authority, further inſtanced in the Acts of Queen *Elizabeth*; the Fruits of it a Spawn of Hereſies, Diſſenſions, and Variations in Religion: Thence it infers, their Religion is free from all thoſe miſerable Conſequences, the ſafeſt to live and to die in; and that all who do not live in it, and abide faithfully in that Profeſſion, are cenſured by the Church, and will ever juſtly be condemned and anathematized by her Decrees, as forſaking the infallible Guide, and adhering to that fallible, uncertain Rule of Scripture, according to their own Interpretation of it.* But though theſe Attempts are not to be wondered at among Perſons who profeſs themſelves Papiſts; yet, that Proteſtants themſelves ſhould give a Handle to the Adverſaries of Proteſtantiſm, to reproach their genuine Principles, and the

* Appendix to Pope *Pius*'s *Creed*, printed in 1734.

the zealous Abettors of them, deſerves to be mentioned to their Diſhonour, and the Diſcredit of their Hiſtories.

The Uſe M. *Boſſuet* makes of his Hiſtory of the Variations of Religion in the Proteſtant Churches in the *Low Countries*, is principally this, that the only true univerſal Catholic Church, under their univerſal infallible Head, *has been always invariably the ſame*, and conſequently a Separation from her heretical and dangerous; however, in the Courſe of this Hiſtory, it will appear that this wants Proof, and there can be no Impropriety in correcting an Hiſtorian, when we find him miſtaken or partial.*

Many of the Hiſtorians of our own Nation have blended civil, military and eccleſiaſtical Affairs together; ſome have confined their Hiſtory to the Church of *England*, others to the Church of *Scotland*; ſome have treated only of particular Sects, others have dwelt on mere controverted Points, often in anſwer to their Opponents, with more of uncharitable Warmth than Argument. Many of theſe Hiſtorians have been of Uſe in this Compilation, though I was from thence led to conſtruct this Work on what I apprehended, a more eligible Plan.

With reſpect to Chronology, I have aimed at the greateſt Preciſion and Accuracy. In many remarkable Events I have followed *Blair*'s Chronology, preſuming it was compiled with great Care, and compared and corrected by former Chronologies; and I have ſometimes given the different Dates. Wherein that did not ſatisfy me, I have conſulted *Dupin*,

* See *Boſſuet*'s Variations of Religion in the Proteſtant Churches, 2 vol. 4to, *French*.

Dupin, *Tillemont*, *Speed*, *Stowe*, *&c.* and as to ſome Rites, Ceremonies and Cuſtoms, I have been obliged to recur to ſuch Authors as had controverted thoſe Subjects, and produced the beſt Authority they could in ſupport of their Point.

In the Dictionary of Sects annexed to this Work, and of ambiguous Words and Phraſes, I have, in general, quoted the Author from whence I have borrowed the Definition, or received my Information; and where Words have been ſo differently underſtood and applied, as ſcarce to have a diſtinct determinate Meaning, I have given the Senſe of more Authors than one, that the Reader may form a juſter Idea thereof.

The WHOLE is moſt humbly inſcribed to every ingenious and impartial Enquirer after Truth, by

The AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

RELIGION essential to Man; his Duty and Happiness. Natural Religion defined, its immutable Obligation, &c. Revealed Religion, its Expediency and Utility. General History of the Old Testament. The superior Excellency the New Testament. Truth, its Nature, and Importance in general, and of religious Truths in particular. The principal Source of Uncertainty in our Enquiries after Truth, the Causes of Corruption in Christianity, and the Difficulties attending the Understanding the Scriptures, considered. Truth, nevertheless, attainable in all important and essential Points, with the Means of acquiring it. The right Privilege and Duty of free and impartial Enquiry, as opposed to Prejudice and Bigotry, and to a careless Indifference. The abuses of free enquiry. The Advantages attending the diligent Pursuit of Truth, and the pernicious Consequences of Ignorance and Error. With some Remarks applicable to the Subjects of the Work.

Religion essential to Man, his Duty and Happiness.

RELIGION, in its genuine principles and influences, is so sublime and excellent, in its nature and effects so noble and beneficent, and so admirably suited to the state and circumstances of reasonable, intelligent and accountable creatures, that it justly claims to be the matter of our first and principal concern.

Man is a creature formed for religion, Ζωον το θεοσεβες-ταλον *, is dependent on a supreme Being, capable of knowing on whom he depends; and has a natural awe

* Plato in Timæo.

of his Creator impreſſed on his mind. He naturally admires the grandeur, beauty, and uſe, that abound all over the world; he has a natural curioſity to prompt him to enquire after the *cauſe*, and has reaſon to diſcover to him a ſupreme all perfect mind, as the only adequate cauſe of this infinity of beauty and good; his paſſions of veneration, gratitude, fear and hope, naturally terminate in this Being; as the only object equal to them; and his natural apprehenſions of eternity, naturally excite him to ſecure, by goodneſs and piety, the favour of that Almighty and eternal Being, who alone can make him happy during that everlaſting ſtate of which he is apprehenſive. And now laying all theſe properties together, *ſelf-love*, *reaſon*, a *ſocial diſpoſition*, and benevolent affections, a ſtrong *ſenſe* and *love* of *beauty*, a natural *dependence* on a *ſupreme Being*, and a natural *awe* of him, &c. we have an idea of human nature, and from this idea of human nature, the natural difference betwixt virtue and vice, and the excellency of religion, will appear *.

Natural Religion defined.

Religion is generally conſidered as natural or revealed, and theſe are differently defined, and as differently eſtimated as to their importance. Natural religion, Mr. Wollaſton tells us, conſiſts in "the purſuit of happineſs, by the practice of reaſon and truth †. Mr. Chambers defines it to be, "whatever we diſcover to be due and meet by the mere dictates of natural reaſon ‡." This is ſometimes called ethics or moral virtue, and includes in it theſe duties which, on the principles of reaſon, a man owes to God, to ſociety, and to himſelf; the duties we owe to the Deity reſulting from our relation to him, as our Creator, benefactor, lawgiver, and judge, and as the original fountain of all goodneſs, wiſdom, beauty and happineſs are veneration, grati-

* Grove's Moral Philoſophy, p. 139.
† Wollaſton's Religion of Nature delineated, p. 52.
‡ Chambers's Dictionary, Art. Religion.

tude,

tude, love, reſignation, dependence, obedience, worſhip and praiſe, which, according to the meaſure of our finite capacities, ought to maintain ſome proportion to the grandeur of the object whom we love, and the greatneſs of our obligation. The duties we owe to ſociety of peculiar obligation, are filial or conjugal; but in general we owe to others, love, juſtice, ſincerity, fidelity, charity, the love of our country, and univerſal benevolence. The duties reſpecting ourſelves are prudence, fortitude, the government of the appetites and paſſions, humility and reſignation; theſe conſtitute the temper of happineſs, and are the elements of our perfection and felicity *. The eſſence of all religion, ſays an ingenious writer, is love to God and love to man †.

Another judicious author ſays, by natural religion we are to underſtand all thoſe things, which intelligent beings, by the right exerciſe of their reaſonable faculties, can diſcover to be their duty, without a ſupernatural revelation to direct them, and upon that diſcovery ſo made, or capable of being made, which they are obliged to purſue, and practiſe in their ſeveral circumſtances, offices or relations in life. Thus to love and reverence the Deity, to do juſtice between man and man, between our neighbours and ourſelves, and to be charitable and benevolent to all proper objects, are all of them branches of natural religion; which every man's reaſon may diſcover to him, and which the preſent conſtitution of things requires from him, and neceſſarily ſubjects him to ‡.

The law of nature, ſays another ingenious gentleman, is the will of God, relating to human actions, grounded in the moral differences of things, and becauſe diſcoverable by the light of nature, obligatory upon all mankind. It is called the law of nature, 1. Becauſe of the manner of its promulgation,

* Martin's Ethics. Wollaſton's Religion of Nature, §. vi. N. 19.
† Rational Catechiſm, p. 59. See alſo Fordyce's Philoſophy.
‡ The eternal obligation of Natural Religion, p. 1, 2.

which is by natural reaſon; 2. Becauſe of its ſource or foundation, this law reſulting from the reſpective nature of Beings, and things: of Beings, as God and man, and of things or actions, as morally good or evil, and having different phyſical effects; 3. Becauſe it is the law of God. Nature is but a *fictitious* * perſon, and all that is ſaid of the wiſdom of her deſigns, and operations of her power, or of her laws, is to be aſcribed to him, who is the author of nature. The law or religion of nature is ſo called, ſays the judicious Dr. Conybeare †, either becauſe it is founded in the reaſon and nature of things, or elſe becauſe it is diſcovered to us, in the uſe and exerciſe of thoſe faculties which we enjoy. The religion of nature, as it is conſidered in theſe different views, will import quite different things; in the former it ſignifies a perfect collection of all thoſe moral doctrines and precepts which have a foundation in the nature and reaſon of things; but in the latter it is ſuch a collection as may be diſcovered by us, in the exerciſe of our proper faculties, according to the means and opportunities we enjoy.

Dr. Clarke has been very clear and explicit in the diſcuſſion of this point; he ſays there is a neceſſary and immutable difference of things, that conſtitute an action morally fit or unfit; that ſome actions are in themſelves fit and reaſonable, and incumbent on men to do, even ſeparate from the conſideration of thoſe rules; being the poſitive will or command of God, and abſtracted from any views of private and perſonal advantage here, or reward hereafter: and *vice verſa* ‡, he adds, page 6, That though theſe moral obligations are incumbent on all reaſonable creatures, an-

* The Stoics often made uſe of the word Nature, as another name for God. Senec. de Benef. 47. Grove's Moral Phil. vol. II. p. 130.

† Defence of revealed Religion, p. 11, &c.

‡ Dr. Samuel Clarke, on the unchangeable Obligations of natural Religion, p. 5.

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tecedent to any command, or in reſpect to the reward; yet that it is certain and neceſſary that moral good and moral evil will be attended with reward or puniſhment; becauſe the ſame reaſons which prove God himſelf to be neceſſarily juſt and good, and the rules of juſtice, equity and goodneſs, to be his unalterable will, law, and command, to all rational beings, prove alſo that he cannot but be pleaſed with and approve ſuch creatures as imitate and obey him, by obſerving theſe rules, and be diſpleaſed with ſuch as act contrary thereto; and conſequently that he cannot, but ſome way or other, make a ſuitable difference in his dealings with them, and manifeſt his ſupreme power and abſolute authority, in finally ſupporting, maintaining and vindicating, effectually the honour of the divine laws, as becomes the righteous governor and diſpoſer of all things; and as this does not appear viſible in the adminiſtration of providence in this world, it follows, that there will be a ſtate after this, wherein there will be an impartial retribution. That this is ſo apparently founded on truth, that there have been almoſt in every age, even among the Heathens, ſome wiſe and brave, and good men, who have by ſtudy and application made great diſcoveries in regard to theſe truths, and deduced ſuitable inferences from them *. Thus Cato wiſely aſſerts, if there is a God, he muſt delight in virtue, and thoſe whom he delights in muſt be happy.

Dr. Chandler ſays †, there is as certain and immutable difference between moral good and evil, virtue and vice, as there is between darkneſs and light, bitter and ſweet; a difference not accidental to, but founded on the things themſelves; not merely the reſult of the determination and arbitrary will of another, but which the very ideas of the things themſelves

* Ibid. pages 8, 9.
See our Account of Deiſm.

† Dr. Samuel Chandler on the neceſſary and immutable Difference between moral Good and Evil. Proteſtant Syſtem, p. 280.

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do really and neceſſarily include. In like manner; piety to God, gratitude for benefits received, juſtice and charity, temperance and chaſtity, and the like virtues, are as eſſentially diſtinct from, and do convey as oppoſite and diſtinct ideas to impiety, ingratitude, injuſtice, uncharitableneſs, intemperance, luſt and the like vices; that it is abſolutely poſſible theycan form the ſame ideas, or raiſe the ſame ſentiments or apprehenſions in our breaſt; and though men may diſregard theſe intrinſic and neceſſary differences in their practice, thro' the warmth of paſſion, or the powerful influence of corrupt habits; yet they can never deſtroy that difference, nor make the ideas of them to coincide, and become indiviſibly the ſame. P. 295, he adds, This difference between moral good and evil, and the fitneſſes and unfitneſſes which they neceſſarily infer, is as eaſily and certainly to be diſcerned by mankind, as the difference between any natural or ſenſible objects whatſoever; and as virtue is, in the conſideration and idea of it, much more lovely and commendable than vice, ſo the natural conſequences with which they are almoſt conſtantly and inſeparably connected, plainly ſhew, which is moſt reaſonable and fit in itſelf, and inforce the indiſpenſible obligations of moral virtue *. And page 307, But beſides this, ſurely there is a God that governs the world, who is not wholly inattentive to, and regardleſs of the moral ſtate and character of his creatures; a God who, from the purity and rectitude of his nature, will ever look with the higheſt complacency on thoſe who reſemble him in his moral perfections; whilſt thoſe, whoſe actions ſhew them to be degenerated from the principles and rules of moral virtue, will be the objects of his diſpleaſure.

Theſe apprehenſions of moral virtue appear to be interwoven with the nature of man, and the importance of morality to the human life, and to its main and principal ends, ſhews wiſdom and deſign in giving men

* Chandler Ibid, p. 295.

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the ſenſe and knowledge of it ſo univerſally. When a ſpecies of intelligent beings are ſent into the world with ſentiments of morality, which are ſo evidently conducive to their happineſs, filling with a variety of rational pleaſure, eminently uſeful to each other, and advancing their perfection and felicity in proportion to the practice of moral virtues, it ſufficiently demonſtrates they were not originally invented by politicians, and impoſed upon credulous mankind as the dictates of nature. It is hence evident, that morality is a part of the human conſtitution, and owes its ſource to its author: not that we are neceſſarily virtuous, as we are ſenſible or intelligent; for the very notion of it imports free-agency or choice; but the true meaning is, that the mind of man is ſo framed, as, when it attains the full exerciſe of its rational powers, to be neceſſarily ſenſible of moral obligations, and cannot willfully and premeditately act a contrary part, without doing violence to itſelf, which is all the neceſſity which is conſiſtent with the nature of ſuch a Being, and the nature of morality*.

One important uſe which Dr. Chandler †, and many other judicious authors, draws from theſe premiſſes is, that this difference of things, ariſing out of their very natures, leads us to form juſt conceptions of the perfections and attributes of God. For inſtance, when we ſay, that God doth neceſſarily exiſt, doth not this ſuppoſe a natural and fixed difference between neceſſary and precarious exiſtence? In like manner, when we ſay, that God is eternal, immenſe, intelligent, all-powerful, and the like; we mean, that God is not a temporary, limited, inconſcious, impotent Being; and of conſequence do ſuppoſe, that the diſtinctions are not arbitrary, but as neceſſary and eternal as the Being of God himſelf. In like manner, with reſpect to God's

* Abernethy's Sermons on the Being of God, proved from Human Intelligence and Morality. Syſtem, p. 36, 37, 38.

† Chandler's Immutable Difference. Syſtem, p. 286.

moral

moral perfections, when we ſay, that God is wiſe, and juſt, and good, and eternally and unalterably ſo; we mean, at leaſt, that God is not a fooliſh, unrighteous, evil, and cruel Being; and therefore muſt ſuppoſe that the difference between wiſdom and folly, juſtice and injuſtice, evil and good, cruelty and mercy, is abſolutely eternal and unalterable as God himſelf, of whom we affirm the one and deny the other; and therefore is not owing to his willing that it ſhould be ſo, nor alterable at his pleaſure, nor dependent on him for its continuance; for if the diſtinction between theſe moral entities or objects was merely arbitrary, and originally the reſult only of the will of God, it can never be affirmed of him that he is eternally and immutably the one and not the other. For upon this ſuppoſition he was not true, or juſt, or good, till he willed to be ſo, and might have been weak, unjuſt, and evil, by a like determination of his will; if there be no eſſential immutable difference in the things themſelves. Nor can there be any poſſible certainty of God's continuing for the future to be wiſe, and juſt, and good, and not the contrary; for if there be no other difference between the one and the other, but what the will of God hath conſtituted; that will ceaſing, or altering theſe diſtinctions, in conſequence muſt ceaſe or alter, and God may be evil inſtead of good, or rather good and evil at the ſame time; which is an evident abſurdity and contradiction.

On theſe accounts, ſays our author, I apprehend it plainly appears, that the very notion of God implies the neceſſary, eſſential, immutable, and independent difference between moral good and evil; and, indeed, without this ſuppoſition, we could have no ſure and fixed rule of action to ourſelves as reaſonable creatures; for if piety, juſtice, charity, and the like virtues, are the creatures of mere power, and the precarious effects of abſolute will and pleaſure, power and will may immediately alter them, cancel men's obligations to

regard

regard them; and ſubſtitute in the room of them impiety, injuſtice and cruelty, as the great obligations and duties of human nature *.

Again, moral good and evil are a kind of relative terms, that is, they do ſuppoſe, either in idea or actual exiſtence, certain reaſonable beings, and certain relations in which they ſtand to each other. Before ever the creation was formed, God was in and of himſelf poſſeſſed of infinite perfection, of all that power and wiſdom, which could not but exert themſelves in all acts of juſtice and goodneſs to his creatures. After their being brought in actual exiſtence, the original fitneſs of which conduct towards them was clearly diſcerned by God; whilſt they were yet only preſent in idea to his mind, and aroſe from thoſe apprehended relations which were actually in time to ſubſiſt between God and them. And as God had nothing to determine him in the formation of the world, but the direction of his own infinite underſtanding and wiſdom, he was undoubtedly at liberty to form what ſyſtems of beings he thought proper.

When, indeed, God had actually given being to reaſonable creatures of ſuch particular capacities and circumſtances, their relations to each other; then, the fitneſs and obligations of thoſe duties reſulting from them, became certain and neceſſary, and were no longer dependent on the will of God, whether they ſhould carry in them any reaſonable obligation or not; and when they became the matter of an immediate divine command, they were not therefore reaſonable only becauſe commanded, but commanded becauſe naturally and antecedently reaſonable. And the reaſon of this is evident, becauſe the fitneſs and unfitneſs of moral good and evil, are as neceſſary and certain, as the natural and original difference between them. This, therefore, muſt be

* Vid. Cicer. de Legibus, l. 1. c. 16.
See Dr. Samuel Clarke on the unchangeable Obligation of Natural Religion, p. 50 & ſeq.

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the ſupreme, immutable and univerſal rule of action to all reaſonable beings whatſoever. It is the one certain and unerring rule of the Divine conduct, and conſequently the moſt certain, the moſt amiable, and worthy rule of action to every reaſonable creature *.

And the evident tendency of virtue, ſays another ingenious author, is not only the private happineſs of ſingle perſons, but the good of the whole human kind; an univerſal benevolence links us together, and intereſts every one of us in the affairs of another, ſo far as to deſire and endeavour their ſafety and happineſs, not inconſiſtently with our own. There are other particular determinations of the virtuous kind, ſuch as compaſſion, natural affection, gratitude, and the love of our country, ſo confeſſedly natural to men, as by common conſent to obtain the name of humanity; but ſo prevalent in ſome as to put them upon the moſt ſelf-denying and hazardous enterprizes for the good of others, and take the higheſt pleaſure when they ſee the effect of them promote a general good †.

When we conſider the conſtitution of human nature, with all its powers, affections, and principles of action, as the work of God; then that ſenſe of right and wrong of moral good and evil, which is the great diſtinction of mankind from all the inferior orders, appeareth to demand particular notice; as being not only in itſelf conſidered, the higheſt and moſt important faculty of the mind, but as what is given us for directing our conduct, and as what principally pointeth out to man his chief end, and that which is his ſupreme good. That the ſenſe of right and wrong muſt have been intended by the Author of our beings as a law or rule for directing our conduct, is evident; for it is impoſſible to ſeparate a ſenſe of right and a ſenſe of

* See this more largely treated of in Doctor Chandler's Diſcourſe, before cited.

† Abernethy, on the Unity of God, proved from the apparent Unity of Deſign in his Works. Syſtem, p. 91.

obligation.

obligation. *A thing is right, therefore it is to be done; a thing is wrong, therefore it is not to be done*; is the original law or language of nature, with which every man is acquainted; and while the ſenſe of right and wrong remaineth, the heart inſtantly and neceſſarily approveth what appeareth to be right, and condemneth what it judgeth to be wrong *.

But it is an inquiry of the utmoſt moment to virtue and to human happineſs, how the Creator is diſpoſed and affected towards his creatures, as they obſerve it, or deviate from it in their actions. It may be imagined, and this appeareth plainly to have been the ſenſe of ſome perſons, that though the univerſe, and all the creatures in it, are the work of an original intelligent cauſe, perfectly wiſe, powerful, and beneficent; and the whole creation is governed by the ſole ſuperintending providence of this being, and particularly, that all the inſtincts and affections planted in the heart of man, are his workmanſhip; yet he doth not attend at all to the temper or behaviour of men, as being according to the moral quality of them, the objects of his approbation or diſpleaſure: that, though he hath given to his creatures, the ſenſe of good and evil, of right and wrong, as a means of ſerving thoſe purpoſes by them which he had in view; yet he himſelf hath not that regard to right and wrong, which we find in our own minds, nor any thing analogous; and therefore he is not diſpleaſed with the tranſgreſſion of this law of our nature, nor hath any pleaſure or complacency in our obedience, and that we are never to expect any interpoſition of his, to give us tokens of his favour, for having purſued that which is right, or of his diſpleaſure, for having done what is wrong: that men are by the laws of nature thoroughly furniſhed for ſerving the purpoſes of this life; but that this is all that is

* Duchal on God's Moral Government. Syſtem, p. 313. And Doctor Foſter on Natural Religion and Social Virtue, vol. II. p. 12.

to be expected, and that by eſtabliſhing and maintaining this conſtitution of things, the Creator hath made proviſion for preſerving the world in that ſtate which will anſwer his original deſign.

Very widely different from this way of thinking is the ſenſe of thoſe who conſider the ſupreme Being as a lawgiver, and a moral governor, in the proper ſenſe of the word; believing, that as he hath, in the ſenſe of right and wrong, written a law upon the heart of every man, and hath planted in every man a conſcience to approve or diſapprove of his actions, as they are good or evil; ſo he is himſelf attentive to the conduct of every individual, is pleaſed with the conformity of his temper and actions to the law that he hath given him, and diſpleaſed with the tranſgreſſors of it, and will interpoſe to teſtify his pleaſure or diſpleaſure by ſuch rewards and puniſhments as perfect wiſdom ſhall ſee fit and neceſſary to anſwer the end of a moral adminiſtration; that though God doth not interpoſe in the preſent ſtate of things by any acts of his, ſo as fully to anſwer what reaſon ultimately expecteth from a perfect moral ruler, in rewarding the good, and puniſhing the bad; yet another ſtate of things is to be expected, in which the great deſign of his moral adminiſtration ſhall be perfected, and he, as judge of the world, will do right to every ſubject of his moral kingdom.

I cannot better cloſe the preceding remarks on natural religion, and thereby introduce the advantages of a revelation, than with the teſtimony of Dr. Middleton, in relation to the religious and moral ſentiments of Cicero, the greateſt Heathen philoſopher, whoſe ideas were probably the moſt refined of any man unaſſiſted by revelation.

The Doctor, having obſerved that the ſcheme of morality profeſſed by Cicero was certainly the moſt complete that the Gentile world had ever been acquainted

quainted with, the utmoſt effort that human nature could make towards attaining its proper end, and taken notice of ſome conſiderable deficiencies in it, he adds, "From this general view of Cicero's religion, one cannot help obſerving, that the moſt exalted ſtate of human reaſon is ſo far from ſuperſeding the uſe, that it demonſtrates the benefit of a more explicit revelation; for though the natural law, in the perfection it was carried by Cicero, might ſerve as a ſufficient guide to the few, ſuch as himſelf, of enlarged minds, and happy diſpoſitions; yet it had been ſo long depraved and adulterated by the prevailing errors and vices of mankind, that it was not diſcoverable even to thoſe few, without great pains and ſtudy, and could not produce in them at laſt any thing more than a hope, never a full perſuaſion; whilſt the greateſt part of mankind, even of the virtuous and inquiſitive, lived *without the knowledge of a God, or the expectation of a futurity*, and the multitude in every country was left to the groſs idolatry of the popular worſhip."

This gives us abundant reaſon to reflect on the advantages we enjoy by the divine light of a revelation, without the pains of ſearching, or danger of miſtaking, whereby we have not only the hope but the aſſurance of happineſs, and are not only the believers, but the heirs of immortality.

It muſt however be acknowledged, that chriſtianity preſuppoſes the truth of natural religion. Whatſoever ſubverts natural religion, does conſequently much more ſubvert chriſtianity, and whatſoever tends to confirm natural religion is proportionably of ſervice to the true intereſt of the Chriſtian *.

I have dwelt the longer on theſe particulars, as I apprehend it is of great importance to direct our enquiries in religion, as well as to regulate our conduct; and it will probably appear, on the moſt careful exa-

* Dedication to Clarke, and Leibinitz's Papers.

mination, that the internal evidence of a revelation, * *its conformity to the reaſon and nature of things*, is the ſtrongeſt proof of its divine original.

Let what is written in the books of the New Teſtament be tried by that which is the touchſtone of all religion; I mean, that religion of nature and reaſon, which God hath written in the hearts of every one of us, from the firſt creation †.

But notwithſtanding the Creator and Sovereign of the world has given a law to the whole human race, written on the heart, and ariſing from the nature of man, from his relation to the author of his Being, and his connections with mankind; this law was far from anſwering the purpoſes for which it was deſigned. Tho' it was agreeable to the dictates of uncorrupted affections, and to our natural ideas of the amiableneſs, truth and propriety of action, it was frequently perverted by vice, and the powers of reaſon darkened by ſuperſtition, till at length they became faſhionable, and the immoralities of mankind blinding the underſtanding to ſuch a degree, as to render the imaginations of the heart habituated to evil. The Almighty ſaw fit to extirpate almoſt the whole human race, and the deſcendants of the pious family, that was ſaved unawed by the deluge that had depopulated the earth, and running into the vices for which the old world was puniſhed; the divine Being ſaw it expedient to interpoſe, and, by making revelations of his will, to awaken and fix their attention, in

Expediency of a Revelation.

* We would not be underſtood to mean, that revealed religion muſt be in every reſpect conformable, but only that it be not in any contradictory to natural; for it is certain, that there are many particulars in revealed, which makes no part of natural religion, and which the pureſt and moſt improved reaſon alone could never have attained the leaſt conception of.

See Heathcote on Natural Religion, the Foundation of Revealed, pag. 40.

† Prideaux Letter to the Deiſts, Sect. 3.

order

order to recover them from idolatry, to the knowledge and worſhip of one living and true God, and to convince them that the path of virtue is that of happineſs.

Revealed Religion is what we learn to be our duty by ſome ſupernatural means, as by an expreſs declaration of God himſelf in the Scriptures *. The Bible or Scriptures contain the writings of the Old and New Teſtament; of whoſe antiquity, authenticity, expediency and excellency, many learned volumes have been wrote, by perſons properly diſpoſed and qualified, to do juſtice to the ſacred writings, and contribute to their greater acceptableneſs and uſefulneſs to mankind †. *Revealed Religion defined.*

That the ſeveral books of the Old Teſtament, particularly thoſe of Moſes, are of greater antiquity than any other writings, appears very evident from the language and characters in which they were originally wrote, and the conſtant reference made to them by all other writers of antiquity, and from the ſeveral principal matters contained in them ‡.

It begins with the creation of the world, and informs us of the origin of our firſt parents, Adam and Eve, their ſtate of innocence, perfection, duty and happineſs, and of their ſin, defection and conſequent puniſhment ‖. It opens to our view the propitious intentions of the Deity, for their recovery and final happineſs §.

It likewiſe informs us of the general degeneracy of mankind, and of their deſtruction by the univer-

* Chamber's article of Religion. Bennet on the Truth, Uſefulneſs and Inſpiration of Scripture.

† Simpſon's Divine Authority of Scripture.
Doctor Conybeare's Defence of Revelation againſt Tindal.

‡ Le Clerc's Grotius, p. 23.
Doctor Callamy's Sermon on Inſpiration, p. 31.

‖ Lamy's Introduction to the Scripture.
Jameſon's Introduction to the Pentateuch.

§ Doctor Watts on the Ruin and Recovery of Mankind.
Thompſon's Mediator.

ſal deluge *. It treats of the character and conduct of Noah, Abraham, Jacob and Iſrael, and of many other illuſtrious perſons for our imitation †. It gives us a general hiſtory of the Jews, of their laws and ſtatutes preſcribed by God, and diſpenſed by his ſervants, Moſes, Aaron, &c. for their regulation and government, ceremonial as to their ſacrifices, moral as to the ten commandments, and judicial reſpecting their œconomy and diſcipline, with the ſanctions whereby they were inforced ‡.

It affords more clear and ample diſcoveries of the being and perfections of God, than was diſcoverable by the light of nature ‖. In many parts of this hiſtory, the ſcenes of the divine providence are admirably diſplayed, evidencing that God is the moral governor of mankind, the lover and rewarder of virtue §; but in a peculiar manner it exhibits many great and glorious prophecies and promiſes of a Meſſiah, all making way for and introductory to that far more glorious diſpenſation of truth and grace by the goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt ¶.

It is not my province, neither will it conſiſt with the limits of my introduction, to attempt a vindication of the divine authority of the ſcriptures; but I refer the reader to ſuch judicious authors as have particularly entered into the merits of the ſubjects, and obviated the principal objections to particular paſſages **. I may however obſerve, that the more diligently the writings of Moſes and the prophets are attended to, their connections with the writings of the New Teſtament

* Lamy's Introduction to the Holy Scriptures, p. 265 & ſeq.
† Doctor Watt's Catechiſm and Scripture Hiſtory.
‡ Jameſon on the Pentateuch.
‖ Doctor Clarke on the Evidences of Revealed Religion, p. 198. Doddridge's Family-Expoſitor, vol. I.
§ Biſhop Chandler's Defence of Chriſtianity againſt Collins.
¶ Doctor John Newton of Prophecies, 3 vol.
** Waterland's Scripture vindicated, in anſwer to Tindal. Sir Iſaac Newton upon Daniel, p. 252.

will

will be more conſpicuous, and their evidence jointly ſtrengthened *. Upon the whole, however dark and ambiguous ſome parts of the Old Teſtament may appear, we have ſufficient reaſon to conclude from its internal characters, as well as traditionary evidence, that it is of divine original, adapted by infinite wiſdom to the ſtate of the world at that time †.

The Chriſtian Revelation.

But of the *Chriſtian revelation*, the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we have the higheſt reaſon to admire its *ſuperior evidence* and *tranſcendent excellency*. Evidence may be conſidered as internal or external. The internal evidences depends upon the deſign and tendency of the hiſtory; the probability of the things related; the conſiſtence of the ſeveral parts, and the plainneſs and ſimplicity of the naration, &c. &c.

External evidence, reſpects ſuch certain ſigns and matters of fact, as may be an undeniable evidence of the authors divine commiſſion, by miracles wrought; by the accompliſhment of prophecies, the teſtimony of many credible witneſſes, agreeing in all material circumſtances, &c. &c ‖.

And every attentive reader may obſerve ſeveral of thoſe internal characters, and likewiſe many of the external proofs apparently applicable to the writings of the New Teſtament. This however opens ſuch a wide field to my view, that it will be impoſſible for me to do juſtice to a ſubject of this nature, within the intended limits of my introduction; I ſhall nevertheleſs introduce ſome arguments in favour of

* Prideaux's Connection of the Old and New Teſtament, 4 vol. Millar's Hiſtory of the Propagation of the Goſpel, vol. I. p. 654, 450.

† Doctor John Newton on Prophecies.

Doctor Doddridge calls it an invaluable treaſure, which demands our daily delightful and thankful peruſal, and ſuch as it is capable of being defended againſt its ſubtleſt enemies. Evid. of Chriſtianity briefly ſtated in the Proteſtant Syſtem, p. 385.

‖ Doctor Samuel Clark on Natural and Revealed Religion.

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the Chriſtian revelation, and refer the reader to many curious and judicious writers in defence of the Chriſtian ſyſtem; evincing *that it is indeed a divine relation.*

Doctor *Lardner* has very learnedly and judiciouſly conſidered the nature of evidence, and applied it to the Chriſtian ſcheme, wherein he has with great labour, and we hope with proportionable ſucceſs, obviated the objections of the moſt ſubtle of its oppoſers *.

Doctor Clarke † has likewiſe conſidered the ſeveral principal arguments in ſupport of the divine authority and excellency of the Chriſtian inſtitution, in the following particulars. 1. That the Chriſtian religion, conſidered in its primitive ſimplicity, and as taught in the ſcriptures, has all the marks and proofs of its being actually and truly a divine revelation. 2. That the practical duties it enjoins, are all ſuch as are moſt agreeable to our natural notions of God, and moſt perfective of the nature, and conducive to the happineſs and well-being of men. 3. That the motives by which the Chriſtian religion inforces the practice of the duties it enjoins, are ſuch as are moſt ſuitable to the wiſdom of God, and moſt anſwerable to the natural expectations of man. 4. That the peculiar manner with which the Chriſtian religion enjoins the duties, and urges the motives before-mentioned, are exactly conſonant to the dictates of ſound reaſon, or the unprejudiced light of nature, and moſt perfective of it. 5. That all the doctrines, which the true, ſimple and uncorrupted Chriſtian religion teaches, are, tho' indeed many of them not diſcoverable by the light of nature, yet, when diſcovered by revelation, moſt agreeable to ſound unprejudiced reaſon.

* Doctor Lardner's Credibility of the Goſpel Hiſtory, 15th vol. Reverend Mr. Leland's Anſwer to the principal Deiſtical Writers.

† Doctor Clarke on the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 220 & ſeq.

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The Doctor then applies his poſtulatums to the following particulars: That it cannot be thought unreaſonable to be believed that God ſhould make a revelation of his will to mankind; and that in ſuch a revelation, wherein God freely proclaims the remiſſion of ſin, and the acceptableneſs of repentance, he ſhould nevertheleſs have appointed ſuch a ſacrifice or expiation for ſin, as might at the ſame time be a ſufficient teſtimony of his irreconcileable hatred againſt it. That a Mediator ſhould be appointed between God and man, through and by whom the prayers of ſinners may be offered up, ſo as to be acceptable in his ſight. That the greateſt difficulty ariſes indeed from the dignity of the perſon (the only begotten Son of God); but even this, upon due enquiry, will appear to have nothing in it contrary to the nature of God, or the condition of things. Or laſtly, that there is any juſt objection to be drawn from the Chriſtian revelation, not being in fact univerſal *. From hence the Doctor endeavours to prove, that the hiſtory of the Life of Chriſt, contained in the New Teſtament, is a true revelation of matter of fact; that God has appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world by his Son Jeſus Chriſt, in order to reward every man according to his works †. That, in order to this final judgment, not only the ſoul ſhall ſurvive the diſſolution of the body; but the body itſelf alſo ſhall be raiſed again ‡. That after the reſurrection and the general judgement, wherein every man ſhall be judged according to his works, they that have done well, ſhall go into everlaſting happineſs ‖; and they that have done evil, into everlaſting puniſhment §.

* See alſo Doctor Benſon's Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, in anſwer to Chriſtianity not founded on Argument.

† Doctor Sherlock on the Future Judgment.

‡ See the Arguments for the Reſurrection of the Body, and Objections anſwered at the end of the Religious Philoſopher.

‖ Of the Nature, different Degree, Duration, &c. See Laurence, Watts, &c.

§ Doctor Samuel Clarke's Sermons.

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The Doctor recites two or three of the principal of the preceding propoſitions, farther to explain and illuſtrate them, viz. that all the doctrines, which the Chriſtian religion teaches, that is not only thoſe plain ones, which it requires to be believed as fundamental to ſalvation, but even all the doctrines it teaches, as a matter of truth, are agreeable to ſound and unprejudiced reaſon*.

Secondly, that every one of theſe doctrines has a natural tendency, and a direct and powerful influence, to reform mens lives, and to correct their manners. This, ſays he, is the great end and ultimate deſign of all true religion †.

Laſtly, that all the doctrines of the Chriſtian faith do together make up an infinitely more conſiſtent and rational ſcheme of belief, than any that the wiſeſt of the ancient philoſophers ever did, or than the cunningeſt of modern unbelivers can invent or contrive.

Our author then proceeds to treat of miracles in general, of their nature and kinds, and how far the miracles wrought by Jeſus Chriſt may be brought in proof of his doctrines. His life and character is likewiſe conſidered as an accompliſhment of the prophecies concerning him. The teſtimony of our Saviour's diſciples he likewiſe introduces; which in all its circumſtances was the moſt credible, certain, and convincing, that they neither could be impoſed on themſelves, nor could have any deſign of impoſing upon others. That the apoſtles left their teſtimony af the works and doctrine of Chriſt in their writings; which writings have been tranſmitted down to us, by an uninterrupted ſucceſſion, through all intermediate ages, without any conſiderable corruption or error, ſuch as might in any

* See Locke on the reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity.

† N. B. Theſe points which are uſually conſidered as the eſſential part of the Chriſtian doctrine, as well as the arguments by which that inſtitution is ſupported, I have choſe to give from the writings of Doctor Clarke on theſe ſubjects, as I apprehend them beſt adapted to my preſent purpoſe, and agreeable to the ſentiments of our moſt eminent divines.

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wiſe diminiſh our certainty of the truth of the whole. In ſum, there is no matter of fact in the world, atteſted in any hiſtory with ſo many circumſtances of credibility, with ſo many collateral evidences, and in every reſpect attended with ſo many marks of truth, as this concerning the doctrine and the works of Chriſt *.

There are indeed many ingenious divines, both of the eſtabliſhed church, and other denomination of Chriſtians, who have wrote with great candour and accuracy on the holy ſcriptures, ſuggeſting many rational and uſeful hints for reconciling many ſeeming contradictions, and obviating ſome of the moſt material objections of unbelievers; and this too, by ſuch juſt and natural interpretations of the moſt obſcure paſſages, by comparing the original text with the author's deſign, &c. as have afforded much ſatisfaction †. Others have expatiated on and illuſtrated the coincidence of ſcripture with reaſon, or ſhewn the real and proper connection there is between natural religion, and many of the moſt ſublime evangelical truths ‡; while others have ſhewn the peculiar tranſcendent excellency of the goſpel precepts ‖; the comparative fitneſs and obligation of moral and poſitive duties §; and have alſo explained and applied thoſe divine promiſes and ſanctions by which our obedience and duty is enforced. A farther reference to ſome of the principal authors might ſuffice in this place; tho', as it is on ſo agreeable and important a

* Doctor Samuel Clarke's Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, p. 328.

† Lock's Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity,
Doctor Clarke's Paraphraſe on the Evangeliſts.
Pile's paraphraſe on the Epiſtles. Doctor Taylor on the Romans.

‡ Chandler's Sermon at the Ordination of Mr. Wright.
Sykes on the Chriſtian Religion againſt Collins.

‖ Lawrence of Chriſtian Morals and Chriſtian Prudence, vol. I.
Leechman of the wiſdom of God in the Goſpel revelation,

§ Burrough's on poſitive Inſtitutions.

ſubject,

ſubject, I ſhall be excuſed if I am ſomewhat more particular.

It is not without very good reaſon, that ſome ingenious authors have entered into the views of what might be reaſonably expected as the ſubject matter of a revelation from God. Doctor Doddridge ſuggeſts, 1. That the ſtate of mankind was ſuch as to need a divine revelation; 2. That there is from the light of nature conſiderable encouragement to hope that God would favour his creatures with ſo needful a bleſſing as a revelation appears to be; 3. We may eaſily conclude, that if a revelation were given, it would be introduced and tranſmitted in ſuch a manner as Chriſtianity is ſaid to have been; 4. That the main doctrines contained in the goſpel are of ſuch a nature, as we might in general ſuppoſe thoſe of a divine revelation would be, namely, *rational, practical and ſublime* *; or more particularly, that it coincides with the unbiaſſed reaſon of mankind †; gives us more juſt and enlarged ideas of the perfections of the Deity ‡, and inſtructs us in the nature of that worſhip, which ought to be paid to him ‖; inculcates and inforces the practice of all relative and ſocial duties §; extends our ideas of the rewards of virtue, and confirms our hopes in the divine goodneſs, beyond what unaſſiſted reaſon could poſſibly do; and this is ſhewn not to be the mere ſurmiſe of prepoſſeſſion and fancy; for it has been evinced, that when the moſt accurate ſchemes of the antient philoſophy was ineffectual to rectify the ſentiments, and reform the conduct of mankind, chriſtianity produced ſuch an amazing change and reformation in both theſe important reſpects, as ſhewed it to be indeed the *power of God*

* Doddridge's Summary of the Evidences of Chriſtianity, Proteſtant Syſtem, p. 376.
† Doctor Samuel Chandler's Vindication of Chriſtianity.
‡ Doctor Samuel Clarke on the being and attributes of God.
‖ Reverend Mr. Bulkley, Nature of Religious Worſhip, p. 14.
§ Doctor Foſter of Natural Religion and Social Virtues, vol. II.

unto

unto ſalvation to every one that believe *. Again, it might farther be ſuppoſed, that a divine revelation would contain ſome things which could not have been learnt from the higheſt improvement of natural light; and that others ſhould be hinted at and referred to, which our feeble faculties ſhould not be able fully to comprehend; ſuch as the exiſtence and providence of God, the reſurrection of the body, the immortality of the ſoul, &c. which the ſcripture reveals. Let then, ſays our author, the evidences of chriſtianity be the ſubject of your ſerious reflection, and frequent converſe; eſpecially ſtudy your Bible, where there are ſuch marks of truth and divinity to be found. Above all, make it your care to practiſe the rules there laid down, and then you will find your faith growing in a happy proportion, and will experience the truth of our Saviour's declaration, that if any man will (reſolutely and faithfully) do his will, he ſhall know of the (chriſtian) doctrine, whether it be of God †.

But what is obſerved with ſo much truth of the Chriſtian religion, muſt always be underſtood of chriſtianity in its primitive purity and ſimplicity, and as ſuch recommended to be read with attention, and regarded as the rule of faith and practice by every Chriſtian, as ſufficient to ſalvation.

Chriſtianity, ſays Mr. Barker, is plain and ſimple, and no impure mixtures are to be made or allowed with it; no Jewiſh obſervances; no human inventions; no old or new traditions: to this ſingly, or without addition or alteration, ſhould Chriſtians ſtick and adhere, keeping to the truth as it is in Jeſus, and preſerving the ſimplicity of the goſpel; not mingling it with any thing that is falſe and foreign to it; not concealing any part of it, or mixing any falſhood with it, or wreſting

* Dr. Chandler's Sermon at the Ordination of Mr Wright, p. 25. Dr. Leechman on the Wiſdom of God in the Goſpel Revelation.

† Dr. Doddridge's Evidences Briefly Stated, p. 380.

and

and perverting the true ſenſe and meaning of it, to ſerve our own ends, the luſts of others, or any worldly purpoſes whatſoever ‡.

Were this property attended to, we ſhould find the important advantages of a revelation would be more univerſally anſwered in the promotion of truth, religion, and harmony, and charity even amongſt men of different ſentiments: and I ſincerely congratulate my countrymen, that, for the laſt fifty years, moſt of our reverend prelates have repreſented the great doctrines of religion in a rational and conſiſtent manner; unconditional decrees have been ſufficiently exploded, the important point of juſtification ſet in a true light, and the ſcriptures recommended as a ſufficient rule of faith and practice, abſtracted from an undue attachment to eſtabliſhment and party; and that the will of God is the only rule immediately binding to the conſcience; and ſubjoin this reaſon for the aſſertion, that he only can have authority over the conſcience to preſcribe to it, who is able to judge the conſcience, the prerogative of God alone.

The ingenious author of the *Rational Catechiſm* gives us a very compendious view of the preceptive and doctrinal part of the New Teſtament. For, ſays he, what are the great duties it recommends, but ſuch as are the moſt ſublime and important, ſpiritual adoration, purity, and integrity of heart, of life and converſation, the keeping a conſcience void of offence towards God, and towards men? This is explained in a moſt perſpicuous manner in numerous inſtances of particular duties, the eſſence of all which is ſaid to be love; intenſely towards God, and extenſively towards men: and the advantages we enjoy by revelation, principally conſiſt in exhibiting the life and character of Jeſus Chriſt as our example, and in the clear evidence it

‡ Rev. Mr. Barker's Sermon at Salter's Hall againſt Popery, p. 7. See alſo the Biſhop of London's ſecond Paſtoral Letter, p. 25 to 30.

gives

gives us of a future life, the reſurrection of the body, and a righteous retribution *. And,

In a diſcourſe of the nature, deſign, and tendency of chriſtianity, a worthy prelate obſerves there were none of the doctrines of the goſpel calculated for the gratification of mens idle curioſity and uſeleſs ſpeculations, much leſs for the exerciſe of our credulity, or as a trial how far we could bring our reaſon to ſubmit to our faith. But as, on the one hand, they were plain and ſimple, and ſuch as their agreeableneſs to the rational faculties of mankind did recommend to our relief; ſo, on the other hand, they had an immediate relation to practice, and were the genuine principles and foundation upon which all human and divine virtues were naturally to be ſuperſtructed †.

And in oppoſition to *ſuperſtitious obſervances* on the one hand, and *unbelievers* on the other; it is obſerved, that was the original ſimplicity and purity of the goſpel attended to, we ſhould find that chriſtianity conſiſts not in laborious, troubleſome, and expenſive obſervances, or in perpetual grimace and affectation; but in a ſteadfaſt faith in the divine miſſion of Jeſus Chriſt, and in a ſteady practice of the duties he requires. And if ſuch who believe not in Jeſus Chriſt, would but diligently compare his precepts with thoſe of the greateſt lawgivers of antiquity, and his life and actions with the moſt celebrated of the philoſophers, and weigh the ſolemn appeals to acknowledged facts in the apologies for chriſtianity, preſented to the Heathen Emperors; we are of opinion they would conſider him, at leaſt, as a divine perſon, as one who all along acted by a divine miſſion and a ſupernatural power ‡.

* Rational Catechiſm, p. 59 & ſeq.

† Archbiſhop of York's Sermon before the Queen, 1704. Archbiſhop Uſher on the Unity of God, p. 15, 17, 28.

‡ Laurence, Rector of Yelvertoft, Chriſtian Morals and Chriſtian Prudence, vol. I.

With reſpect to thoſe who plead, that the whole of religion conſiſts in moral duties, it has been juſtly anſwered by Mr. Prior *: "But is the Chriſtian religion only a republication of the law of nature, or merely a refined ſyſtem of morality; it is ſurely ſomething more; it is an act of grace, a ſtupendous plan of Providence, deſigned for the recovery of mankind from a ſtate of degradation and ruin, to the favour of God, and the hopes of an happy immortality through a mediator. Under this diſpenſation, true religion expreſſeth repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as the perſon appointed by the ſupreme authority of heaven and earth, to reconcile apoſtate men to their offended Maker, as a ſacrifice for ſin, our vital head, and our governing Lord. This is religion as we are Chriſtians." And the peculiar excellency of the Chriſtian religion lies in its bringing to light life and immortality, when wrapped up almoſt in impenetrable darkneſs. This hath ſet the great truths of religion in a clear and ſtrong view, and hath propoſed new and powerful motives to influence our minds, and to determine our conduct: nothing is enjoined to be believed but what is worthy of God; nothing to be practiſed, but what is friendly to man. Some important branches of this diſpenſation reaſon indeed could not diſcover, nor can it now juſtly arraign, as not founded in wiſdom and goodneſs.

Chriſtianity, ſays the reverend Mr. Milner, is the perfection of all religion; the deſign of it is great and noble, namely, to poſſeſs our minds with right apprehenſions of the Supreme Being, of moral good and evil, and of an happineſs moſt worthy our rational nature; and it heightens the idea of its excellence, to ſee it interwoven with a particular diſpenſation of providence and grace, for rendering it more effectual †.

* Rev. Mr. Prior's Reaſonableneſs of the Chriſtian Life, p. 56.
† Rev. Mr. Milner's Preface to Religious Liberty aſſerted.

The

The late Dr. Gibſon, biſhop of London, gives us his ſentiments to the ſame pnrpoſe, viz. Though it is true, that one end of Chriſt's coming was to correct the falſe gloſſes and interpretations of the moral law, and one end of his inſtituting a miniſtry was to keep up in the minds of men true notions of natural religion, and a juſt ſenſe of their obligations to the performance of moral duties; yet it is alſo true, that another end of his coming was, to eſtaliſh a new covenant with mankind upon gracious terms, and moſt engaging promiſes, to ſhew us the method of pardon and reconciliation to God, and eternal happineſs, and to preſcribe rules of greater purity and holineſs, by way of preparation for greater degrees of happineſs and glory; ſo theſe are without doubt the diſtinguiſhing excellencies of the Chriſtian religion, and which it behoves every one to adhere to, as he would be intitled to the privileges and bleſſings of the goſpel-covenant *.

On the other hand, if ſome will believe that truſting in Chriſt is their whole duty, and ſo excuſe themſelves from the obſervation of the moral law; and others will affirm, that the obſervation of the moral law is ſufficient, and ſo will forego the benefit of Chriſt's redemption; if ſome will contend that Chriſt hath done all, and others that he hath done nothing; they err as if they knew not the ſcriptures. The goſpel account is as full and expreſs as words can make it; on the one hand, that faith in Chriſt is the foundation of a Chriſtian's title to heaven; and on the other hand, that repentance and good works are the neceſſary conditions of obtaining it †.

* Firſt Charge, p. 19.

† See Second Paſtoral Letter, p. 63, Octavo Edit. See alſo Biſhop Hoadley's Terms of Acceptance, and his Preſervative; and Dr. Chandler's Knowledge and Practice neceſſary to Happineſs.

And in illuſtration and vindication of the divine wiſdom in the mediatorial ſcheme of man's redemption, and the glorious method of ſalvation by Jeſus Chriſt; that it diſplays the harmony of thoſe perfections of the divine nature, which ſeem moſt oppoſite in their tendency and aſpect againſt ſinners, ſets in the cleareſt view God's diſpleaſure againſt ſin, and at the ſame time opening a way for the moſt extenſive exerciſe of mercy to ſinners; yea, and inhancing both the juſtice and the mercy, more than if there was no atonement required; and alſo a ſurprizing and affecting demonſtration of the inviolable regard God hath to the righteous ſanction of his law, and his concern for the honour of his government; that this is the moſt effectual means to awaken the ſinner to a juſt ſenſe of what he hath deſerved, and doth at the ſame time yield him the ſtrongeſt ſupport and encouragement, under the moſt afflicting ſenſe of his guilt and danger, and carries with it the moſt powerful motives to perſuade him to be reconciled unto God, and influence him to a willing obedience for the time to come *. Dr. Clarke calls it that wonderful compoſition of juſtice and mercy, which men and angels muſt for ever adore, but can never ſufficiently praiſe and celebrate †.

With reſpect to poſitive inſtitutions, which ſome have as it were created as inſignificant, and others have laid too great ſtreſs on; biſhop Hoadley has given us a plain ſcriptural account of, viz. That when the great author of our holy religion publickly declared what were the doctrines upon which he would build his church and kingdom, he inſtituted two apt and ſignificant ordinances to be obſerved in his

* Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator, by Tomkins, p. 157. Dr. Chandler's Sermon at the Ordination of Mr. Wright. And the Eſſay on the Credibility of the Goſpel annexed, by an unknown Hand.

† Dr. Clarke's Sermon on the Sufferings of Chriſt. Leechman's Wiſdom of God in the Goſpel-Revelation.

church.

church. One was baptiſm, that rite or ceremony by which the members thereof ſhould profeſs their faith in, and diſcipleſhip to Chriſt. The other injunction was, that his church and people ſhould ſtatedly, in communion and fellowſhip with each other, eat bread and drink wine in remembrance of the author and finiſher of their faith; and in this they were to continue, in order to ſhew forth and keep up the remembrance of his life and death till he come *.

And when the ſcriptures are properly regarded as our rule, we ſhall find they exhibit to our minds, beſides the principles of natural religion, only a few evangelical doctrines and precepts, which are wiſely adapted to improve our ſentiments of God, give us a juſt idea of his diſpenſation of grace and truth by Jeſus Chriſt, and tending to cultivate that rectitude of mind and life, which may in ſome meaſure fit us for the happineſs therein promiſed.

And it is acknowledged by all proteſtant Chriſtians, that the ſcriptures, more eſpecially the writings of the New Teſtament, contain a plain perfect rule of faith and practice, in oppoſition to the neceſſity of a living infallible guide, and the authoritative impoſition of creeds and articles of faith. Hence that immemorable prelate before-mentioned aſſerts, † The church of Chriſt is the kingdom of Chriſt; he is King in his own kingdom; he is ſole lawgiver to his ſubjects, and ſole judge in matters relating to ſalvation; his laws and ſanctions are plainly fixed. Their faith was once delivered by him; the conditions of their happineſs was once laid down by him; the nature of God's worſhip was once declared by him; and it is eaſy to judge, whether of the two is moſt becoming a ſubject of the kingdom of Chriſt, that is, a member of his church, to ſeek all thoſe particulars in thoſe plain,

* Bp Hoadley's Plain Account.
† Hoadley's Nature of the Kingd. and Church of Chriſt, p. 30.

ſhort declarations of their King and lawgiver himſelf, or to hunt after them through the infinite contradictions, the numberleſs perplexities, the endleſs diſputes of weak men in ſeveral ages, till the enquirer himſelf is loſt in the labyrinth, and perhaps ſits down in deſpair or infidelity. If Chriſt be our King, let us ſhew ourſelves ſubjects to him alone, in the great affair of conſcience and eternal ſalvation, and, without fear of man's judgment, live and act as becomes thoſe who wait for the appearance of an all-knowing and impartial judge, even that King whoſe kingdom is not of this world.

Much to the ſame purpoſe, in oppoſition to the pretended authority and infallibility of the church of Rome, and her boaſted tradition, Dr. Chandler ſays, "we have no full and certain account of the doctrine taught by Chriſt and his Apoſtles but from the records of the New Teſtament; and as theſe contain the whole revelation of the goſpel, all that we are to believe and practiſe as Chriſtians, it is an undeniable conſequence, that we can no otherwiſe demonſtrate our ſubjection and fidelity to Chriſt, as Lord and lawgiver in his church, than by our care in acquainting ourſelves with the ſacred records of truth, and religiouſly adhering to them, as the only rule and ſtandard of our faith and worſhip *; the adhering to which is an eſſential note of the Chriſtian church †. This therefore is the only true antiquity, to which as Chriſtians we are to appeal ‡. The church of God, the true church of Chriſt, is built entirely upon the ſcriptures ‖. The Chriſtian church is properly repreſented as one body, or a ſociety, incorporate by the charter of the goſpel under Jeſus Chriſt, as ſupreme head and governor §. For, as Mr. Leaveſly ſays, Chriſt and his Apoſtles, by preaching and delivering

* Dr. Chandler's Notes of the Church, p. 13. † 15. ‡ 21.
‖ Dr. Wright on Scripture and Traditon, p. 10.
§ Mr. Lowman on Schiſm, p. 26.

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the goſpel truth, and by warning us againſt falſe and deceitful workers, call all men every where to adhere to the truth as it is in Jeſus *. The Bible, then, or the Old and New Teſtament, is acknowledged by all Proteſtants, as the canon, the rule, the only rule of faith and practice.

I ſhall cloſe the whole with that remarkable paragraph of Chillingworth, which whoever hears or reads, as the language of one converted from Popery by the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, cannot help being greatly pleaſed with it. Addreſſing himſelf to a writer of the Romiſh church, he thus pleads the Proteſtant cauſe, "Know then, Sir, that when I ſay the religion of Proteſtants is in truth to be preferred before yours; as on the one ſide, I do not underſtand by your religion the doctrine of Bellarmine or Baronius, or any other private man amongſt you; nor the doctrine of the Sorbonne or of the Jeſuits, or of the Dominicans, or of any other particular company or ſociety amongſt you; but that wherein you all agree or profeſs to agree, the doctrine of the council of Trent; ſo accordingly on the other ſide, by the religion of Proteſtants, I do not underſtand the doctrine of Luther or Calvin, or Melancton, nor the confeſſion of Augſburg or Geneva, nor the catechiſm of Heidelberg, nor the articles of the church of England; no, nor the harmony of Proteſtant creeds and confeſſions; but that wherein they all agree, and which they all ſubſcribe with one accord, as the undoubted perfect rule of their faith and actions, that is, the Bible. The Bible, I ſay the Bible only, is the religion of Proteſtants, whatſoever elſe they believe beſides it: and the plain, irrefragable, and indubitable conſequences of it, well may they hold as matters of opinion, but as matter of faith and religion, neither can they with coherence to their own grounds believe it

* Leaveſly on Reformation, p. 36.

themſelves, nor require the belief of it of others, without moſt high and ſchiſmatical preſumption. I, for my part, after a long, and (as I verily believe and hope) impartial ſearch of the true way to eternal happineſs, do profeſs plainly that I cannot find any reſt for the ſole of my foot, but upon this rock only. I ſee plainly, and with mine own eyes, that there are Popes againſt Popes, councils againſt councils, ſome fathers againſt others, the ſame fathers againſt themſelves, a conſent of fathers of one age againſt a conſent of fathers of another age, the church of one age againſt the church of another age. Traditive interpretations of ſcripture are pretended; but there are few or none to be found. No tradition but only of ſcripture can derive itſelf from the fountain, but may be plainly proved to be brought in, in ſuch an age after Chriſt, or that ſuch an age it was not: in a word, there is no ſufficient certainty but of ſcripture only for any conſidering man to build upon. This, therefore, and this only, I have reaſon to believe, this I will profeſs, according to this I will live, and for this, if there be occaſion, I will not only willingly, but even gladly, loſe my life; though I ſhould be ſorry that Chriſtians ſhould take it from me. Propoſe me any thing out of this book, and require whether I believe or no, and ſeem it never ſo incomprehenſible to human reaſon, I will ſubſcribe it with hand and heart, as knowing no demonſtration can be ſtronger than this, God hath ſaid ſo, therefore is it true. In other things, I will take no man's liberty of judging from him, neither ſhall any man take mine from me. I will think no man the worſe man, nor the worſe Chriſtian, I will love no man the leſs, for differing in opinion from me; and what meaſure I mete to others, I expect from them again. I am fully aſſured that God does not, and therefore men ought not to require any more of any man than this: To believe the ſcripture to be God's word,

word, to endeavour to find the true ſenſe of it, and to live according to it *.

I can ſee no reaſon, ſays a judicious author, for undervaluing revelation, in order to exalt reaſon, nor on the other hand to diſparage reaſon, ſince they jointly concur in furniſhing us with the moſt noble and unexceptionable principles of religion. What but revelation gave to Wollaſton ſo much the ſuperiority over Cicero in his delineation of the religion of nature, particularly with regard to the unity and moral perfections, and providence of the Deity, and the duties owing to him?

All this will be readily acknowledged by Proteſtant Chriſtians of every denomination, while others perhaps do not eaſily perceive the reaſons upon which this principle of their faith is founded, and they raiſe a variety of objections to the authenticity, perſpicuity, reaſonableneſs, and excellency of the Chriſtian revelation; the moſt conſiderable of which will be taken notice of in a following ſection. I ſhall, firſt, endeavour to aſcertain the proper import of the term *Truth*, its importance, &c.

Truth defined.

Truth is a term uſed in a variety of ſenſes, and applied to different ſciences and ſubjects. Logical truth is the conformity of things with the ideas themſelves†. Moral truth is the conformity of words, geſtures, and actions, with the heart ‡. Mr. Chambers defines logical truth to be in direct oppoſition to falſhood, and is applied to the propoſitions which anſwer, or accord to the reality of the thing, whereof ſomething is affirmed or denied ‖. And Mr. Wollaſton ſays, thoſe propoſitions are true, which expreſs things as they are, or truth is the conformity of thoſe words or ſigns by which things are expreſſed to the things themſelves §. Truth, likewiſe, ſignifies veracity, or a conformity of words to thoughts, pure,

* Quoted by Mr. Wright in his Sermon at Salter's hall againſt Popery, page 52. † Martin. ‡ Ibid. ‖ Chambers. § Wollaſton.

or

or unadulterate; exactneſs or conformity to rule; reality, as oppoſed to fiction; honeſty, integrity, &c. ‖ It is uſed for the doctrines of the goſpel, Gal. iii. 1. as oppoſed to Jewiſh ceremonies, John, i. 17. and as the genuine or original, as oppoſed to ſpurious *. Theſe are ſome of the principal ſenſes in which it is uſed; but as the right uſe of reaſon, in the enquiry after truth, is what conſtitutes the ſcience of logic, variety of other definitions and diſtinctions relative to this ſubject may be ſeen in peculiar treatiſes on that ſubject.

The different ſenſes in which I have conſidered truth, or to which this term is applied, convey to our minds an idea of its nature and importance, and that there is a real eſſential and abſolute utility and advantage in the poſſeſſion of it.

Importance of Truth. Indeed the purſuit and acquiſition of truth is of infinite concernment to mankind; hereby we become acquainted with the nature of things, both in heaven and earth, and their various relations to each other. It is by this means we diſcover our duty to God and our fellow-creatures; by this we arrive at the knowledge of natural religion, and learn to confirm our faith in divine revelation, as well as to underſtand what is revealed. Our wiſdom, prudence, and piety, our preſent conduct, and our future hopes, are all influenced by the uſe of our rational powers in the ſearch after truth †.

The love and deſire of truth is a principle implanted in the nature of man; it has generally an eaſy acceſs to unbiaſſed minds, and will aſſume its empire and triumph over error, even in ſpite of popularity, intereſt, and undue influence from others; and religious truths have been often known to arm the mind with integrity, ſuperior to the ſevereſt perſecution. Hence Polybius, the Roman hiſtorian, obſerves, that

‖ Johnſon. * Cruden.
† Dr. Watts's Logic, p. 2.

truth

truth may be oppoſed, but it cannot be ſubdued*: and Cicero, to the ſame purpoſe, that truth always carries ſuch a force with her, that ſhe cannot be overcome, neither by the flattery of art, nor ingenuity of men; and though ſhe had no advocate or patron in her cauſe, yet ſhe would be able to defend herſelf ‡.

But this is not univerſally acknowledged. There are men of a ſceptical turn of mind, who aſſert there is no poſſibility of diſtinguiſhing truth from falſehood; and therefore they have abandoned all pretences to knowledge, and maintain ſtrenuouſly that nothing is to be known.

The firſt men of this humour made themſelves famous in Greece by the name of ſceptics, that is, ſeekers. They taught, that all things are uncertain, though they allowed that ſome were more probable than others. After theſe aroſe the ſect of the Pyrrhonics, from Pyrrho, their maſter, who would not allow one propoſition to be more probable than another. But of this ſect an ingenious author obſerves, that their own doctrine gives their profeſſion the lie; becauſe they determined concerning every propoſition, that it was uncertain, and believed that as a certain truth, while they profeſſed there was nothing certain †.

The moſt important queſtion then on this ſubject is this, what is the criterion or diſtinguiſhed mark of truth? How ſhall we know when a propoſition is true or falſe? There are ſo many diſguiſes of truth in the world, ſo many falſe appearances of truth, that not only one man differs in his ſentiments from another, but one ſectary abſolutely deny what another eſteem undoubted and fundamental. Let us therefore enquire what is the general criterion of truth; and, in order to this, it is proper to conſider what is the reaſon why we aſſent to the truth of one propoſition, and

* Polybius in Excerptis, lib. xii.
‡ Cicero Orat. in Vatinium.
† Watts's Logic, p. 172.

deny

deny another; and this will be found to ariſe from a clear and diſtinct perception, or full evidence of the agreement or diſagreement of our ideas to one another, or to things; for ſince our minds are of ſuch a make, that when the evidence is exceeding plain and ſtrong, we cannot with-hold our aſſent, we ſhould then be neceſſarily expoſed to believe falſhood, if compleat evidence ſhould be found in any propoſitions that are not true. But ſurely the God of perfect wiſdom, truth and goodneſs, would never oblige his creatures to be thus deceived; and therefore he would never have conſtituted us of ſuch a frame as would have rendered it naturally impoſſible to guard againſt error*.

There are two deſires interwoven in the frame of our beings, the deſire of truth, and the deſire of happineſs; in both which there is a kind of infinity, which ariſes after this manner. By the contemplation of my own ſoul, I gain the ideas of ſeveral perfections with which I perceive it to be adorned; following therefore the impulſe of my own mind, I enlarge the proſpect, and widen my ideas more and more, till loſt in the conception of a being, who poſſeſſes all theſe perfections, and very probably many more, with the additional characteriſtics of infinite and eternal: Now it is the nature of the underſtanding, and of the will, to purſue the ſupreme truth, and the ſupreme good; and conſequently while I have a being in view, in whoſe idea is lodged infinite truth and infinite good, which alone is able to anſwer that idea of ſomething like infinity that is in our deſires, I ſhall never reſt ſatisfied in any allotment among the creatures, though in the fineſt apartment in the univerſe, and accommodated with every good, ſhort of a correſpondence and intercourſe with the Deity †.

It is true there are ſome ſpeculative points which God hath placed beyond our reach; and there are

* Dr. Watts.

† Grove, vol. I. p. 92.

others

others of an abſtruſe, ambiguous nature, in the various branches of ſcience, &c. that require much previous learning, ſtrength of natural abilities, ſtudy and application, in the uſe of proper helps to underſtand and explain. Theſe can in no wiſe be the concern of all, and can only with any propriety be the ſubject of enquiry to a few, whoſe diſpoſitions and abilities, leiſure and profeſſion in life, may render it at all eligible; and after all, a diverſity of ſentiments will neceſſarily ariſe. Nor can we reaſonably expect the ſame degree of evidence in all caſes or ſubjects, that properly concern us to make the ſubjects of our enquiry. There are many things in this dark and imperfect ſtate, wherein we muſt be content with probability, where our beſt light and reaſoning will reach no further; we muſt balance arguments as juſtly as we can; and when we cannot find weight enough on either ſide to determine the ſcale with ſovereign force and aſſurance, we muſt content ourſelves perhaps with a ſmall preponderation. This will give us a probable opinion; and theſe probabilities are ſufficient for the daily determination of a thouſand actions in human life, and many times even in matters of religion.—Suppoſe, for inſtance, I had been honeſtly and long ſearching what religion I ſhould chuſe, yet I could not find that the arguments in defence of chriſtianity aroſe to compleat certainty, but went only ſo far as to give me a probable evidence of the truth of it; though many difficulties ſtill remained, yet I ſhould think myſelf obliged to receive and practiſe that religion; for the God of nature and reaſon hath bound us to aſſent and act according to the beſt evidence we have, even though it be not abſolute and compleat; and as he is our ſupreme Judge, his abounding goodneſs and equity will approve and acquit the man, whoſe conſcience honeſtly and willingly ſeeks the beſt light, and obeys it as far as he can diſcover it *.

* Dr. Watts's Improvement of the Mind, p. 208.

Here

Here it may be proper to ſurvey the ſeveral kinds of evidence, or the different ways whereby truth is let into the mind, and which produce accordingly ſeveral kinds of knowledge; and theſe we ſhall diſtribute into theſe ſix, *viz. ſenſe, conſciouſneſs, intelligence, reaſon, human* and *divine teſtimony*. 1. The evidence of ſenſe, is when we form a propoſition according to the evidence of any of our ſenſes; it is upon this evidence that we know and believe the various occurrences in human life; and almoſt all the hiſtories of mankind, that are written by eye and ear-witneſſes, are built upon this principle.

Evidences of Truth.

It is a principle of the Epicureans, that the ſenſes are not capable of being deceived; for beſides that the ſtructure of the organs, and the circumſtances of objects conſidered, they ought not to repreſent things otherwiſe than they do. The ſenſes are purely paſſive; they receive impreſſions from ſurrounding bodies, but pronounce nothing concerning them; that is the buſineſs of the mind, which delivers its opinion upon the divers appearances of ſenſe, and too often not more haſtily than wrong. When therefore we talk of the errors of the ſenſes, the meaning is, that things are many times in themſelves quite different from what they appear to the ſenſes; and that they who take their meaſures of judging from the ſenſes, will unavoidably be led into a thouſand miſtakes.

The reaſons why people truſt ſo much to ſenſe, I believe, are principally theſe:

I. If ſenſe may err, why not reaſon? If one power and faculty may be deceived, why not all others? At which rate we ſhall have no criterion of truth, nor be in poſſeſſion of certainty; but univerſal ſcepticiſm muſt bear down all before it. I anſwer, that becauſe ſenſe may be impoſed upon, it follows not that reaſon may; in caſe ſenſe miſleads us, reaſon may ſet us right again. So that here God hath provided a higher faculty to correct the errors occaſioned

caſioned by the faculties below it; and perhaps the fallaciouſneſs of our ſenſes was deſigned for this very end, that we might make the more frequent uſe of our reaſon. But ſhould reaſon be deceived, there is no faculty above this to inform it better; and are not the wiſdom and goodneſs of God our ſecurity, that he would not frame us with ſuch a conſtitution of mind, as ſhould naturally lead us into error? Beſides this, we are to conſider, that the miſtakes of ſenſe (when it does miſtake) are not dangerous; it has little to do with religion, upon which depends our moſt important intereſt. But reaſon rightly underſtood, and rightly managed, is to be the meaſure of our conduct; and conſequently if free from prejudices, we may be aſſured that ſhall never err in matters of moment and conſequence.

II. If ſenſe may be deceived in one or more inſtances, why not in all? and if in all, we can be certain of nothing. I anſwer, this way of arguing is entirely inconcluſive, becauſe the wiſe Governor has furniſhed us with reaſon to find out our miſtake; and this, by comparing things together, it eaſily does. Upon the whole, we may conclude with this obſervation, that our ſenſes were not given us to inform us ſo much what things are in themſelves, as of the relation they bear to each other, and to our bodies *.

III. As we learn what belongs to the body by the evidence of ſenſe; ſo we learn what belongs to the ſoul by an inward conſciouſneſs, which may be called a ſort of internal feeling, or ſpiritual ſenſation of what paſſes in the mind: Thus it appears that we obtain the knowledge of a multitude of propoſitions, as well as ſingle ideas, by theſe two principles, which Mr. Locke calls ſenſation and reflection. One of them is a ſort of conſciouſneſs of what affects the body, and the other

* Grove, v. p. 409.

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is a conſciouſneſs of what paſſes in the mind *. Some philoſophers define it an inner ſentiment of a thing, whereof one may have a clear and diſtinct notion: in this ſenſe they ſay, that we do not know our own ſoul, nor are we aſſured of the exiſtence of our own thoughts, otherwiſe than by conſciouſneſs †.

IV. Intelligence relates chiefly to thoſe abſtract propoſitions, which carry their own evidence with them, and admit no doubt about them. Our perception of this ſelf-evidence in any propoſition, is called intelligence; it is our knowledge of thoſe firſt principles of truth, which are as it were wrought into the very nature and make of our mind. Accordingly an intelligent being, muſt have ſome immediate object of his underſtanding, or at leaſt a capacity of having ſuch: an intelligent being, among the immediate objects of his mind, muſt have ſome that are abſtract and general; thoſe ideas or objects that are immediate, will be adequately and truly known to that mind, whoſe ideas they are: theſe propoſitions are called axioms or maxims, or firſt principles; theſe are the very foundation of all improved knowledge and reaſonings; and ſuch an immediate view of things in their own nature, is ſometimes called *intuition*.

V. Reaſoning is the next ſort of evidence, and that is, when one truth is inferred or drawn from others, by natural and juſt methods of argument; as, when I ſurvey the heavens and earth, this gives evidence to my reaſon, that there is a God who made them ‖. Thus, by the help of truths already known, more may be diſcovered; for thoſe inferences which ariſe preſently from the application of general truths, to the particular things and caſes contained under them, muſt be juſt, and will hold good, not only in reſpect of axioms and firſt truths, but alſo and equally of theorems and other general truths. When they are

* Dr. Watts's Logic, p. 178.
† Chambers. ‖ Dr. Watts's.

more

more known, theſe may be capable of the like applications, and the truth of ſuch conſequences as are made by virtue of them, will always be as evident as that of the theorems themſelves *: in other words, every juſt conſequence is founded on ſome known truth; by virtue of which, one thing follows from another, and if the premiſſes are true, and the inferences are juſt, they will be ſo too. That power which any intelligent being has of ſurveying his own ideas, and comparing them; of forming to himſelf out of thoſe that are immediate and abſtract, ſuch general and fundamental truths as he can be ſure of, and of making ſuch inferences and concluſions as are agreeable to them, or to any other truth after it comes to be known, in order to find out more truth, prove or diſprove ſome aſſertion, reſolve ſome queſtion, determine what is fit to be done upon occaſion, &c. the caſe or thing under conſideration, being firſt fairly ſtated and prepared, is what I mean by the faculty of reaſon, or what intitles him to the epithet *rational*; or, in ſhort, reaſon is the faculty for making ſuch inferences and concluſions, as are mentioned under the preceding propoſition †.

"The propoſitions, which I believe upon this kind of evidence, are called concluſions or rational truths, and the knowledge we gain this way is properly ſcience."

It is likewiſe remarked by the aforecited judicious author, in treating of the nature and foundations of probability, that the force of it reſults from *reaſon* and *obſervation* together ‡. As the one is not ſufficient without the other, reaſon without *obſervation* wants matter to work upon, and obſervations are neither to be made juſtly by ourſelves, nor to be rightly choſen out of thoſe made by others; nor to be aptly applied,

* Wollaſton's Religion of Nature, p. 43. 4to Edit.

† Ibid. p. 45. Some uſeful obſervations in the ſeq.

‡ This is objected to by other authors, as thoſe obſervations ariſe from the forementioned ſprings of knowledge.

without the aſſiſtance of *reaſon*; both together may ſupport opinion and practice in the abſence of knowledge and certainty; for thoſe obſervations upon the nature of men and things, which we have made ourſelves, we know; and our own reaſoning concerning them, and deductions from them, we know; and from hence there cannot but ariſe in many caſes an internal obligation to give our aſſent to this, rather than that, or to act one way rather than another: and as to the obſervations of others, they may be ſo cautiouſly and ſkillfully taken under our notice, as to become almoſt our own, ſince our own reaſon and experience may direct us in the choice and uſe of them.

VI. Another kind of evidence, is the teſtimony of others, and this is a large part of our knowledge. Ten thouſand things there are which we believe, merely upon the authority or credit of thoſe who have ſpoken or written of them; it is by this that moſt of the tranſactions of human life are managed, we know the characters and laws of our preſent governors, as well as things that are at a vaſt diſtance from us, in foreign nations, or in ancient ages: according as the perſons who inform us of any thing, are many, or few, or more or leſs wiſe, and faithful, and credible, ſo our faith is more or leſs firm or wavering, and the propoſition believed either certain or doubtful; but in matters of faith an exceeding great probability is called a moral certainty *. Hiſtories written by faithful and credible authors, and read with judgment, may ſupply us with examples, parallel caſes, and general remarks, for forming our manners and principles too; and by the frequent peruſal of them, and meditation upon them, a judicious judgment is formed of many dubious caſes, and of matters of great importance.

To conclude, that we ought to follow probability in this caſe, as well as the forementioned, is evident; becauſe where there is no greater certainty to be had,

* See Dr. Watts's Logic, and Ditton on the Reſurrection.

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it becomes our only light and guide; and it muſt be reaſonable to direct our ſteps by probability, when we have nothing clearer to walk by; and, if it be reaſonable, we are obliged to do it. When there is nothing in the oppoſite ſcale, or nothing of equal weight, this in the courſe of nature muſt turn the beam *.

With regard to divine teſtimony, though it comes under the denomination of the evidence of teſtimony, is of a ſuperior nature; and the aſſent to a propoſition upon this evidence is ſtiled *divine faith*, and ſo far as we underſtand the meaning of this word it produces a ſupernatural certainty, or an abſolute infallible aſſurance.

VII. Inſpiration is a ſort of evidence diſtinct from all the former, and that is when ſuch an overpowering impreſſion of any propoſition is made upon the mind by God himſelf, that gives a convincing and indubitable evidence of the truth and divinity of it. But as this is of the higheſt kind of evidence, chiefly, if not ſolely, confined to the prophets, and ſome of the earlieſt apoſtles and firſt propagators of chriſtianity, it is not ſo applicable to our preſent purpoſe, to the nature of thoſe truths it concerns us to know in the ſtate and circumſtances in which Divine Providence hath placed us. This kind of evidence has been ſo often pretended to, either as working on the outward ſenſes, or by impreſſions on the imagination, ſpiritual feelings, ſudden and powerful impulſes on the mind, whereby ſome perſons have fancied a ſuperior or divine light and power attending them, which they could neither explain or prove to the ſatisfaction of rational and judicious perſons, that ſuch pretenſions have been often, and, I think, very juſtly exploded, as the effect of weakneſs and enthuſiaſm.

The various kinds of evidence upon which we believe any propoſition, afford us the following remarks.

* Wollaſton's Religion of Nature, p. 59.

I. That there are ſome propoſitions that admit of different kinds of evidence, and of which we have an unqueſtionable certainty, and conſequently may be conſidered as fundamental truths, to direct our inquiries and conduct.

II. That, though ſome of theſe evidences are ſuperior to others in their nature, and give a greater ground of certainty in ſome points, more immediately thoſe which are the ſubject of divine revelation; yet that reaſon in its own nature will always lead us into truth in matters within its compaſs, if it were uſed aright, or it would require us to ſuſpend our judgement where there is want of evidence; and it muſt, at the ſame time, and with equal certainty, be admitted, as the proper means to judge of the reality and degrees of other kinds of evidence, upon which any other propoſition may preſent itſelf to our minds, and claim our aſſent *. But it will alſo follow, that if the judgment be corrupted, and the underſtanding darkened, with reſpect to religious principles and moral truths, which concern the rectitude and juſt conduct and true happineſs of intelligent and free beings, he is then under as great an incapacity of reaſoning, and incapable to diſcern the proper difference of actions and characters, as if he had been formed with a natural incapacity of reaſoning.

Religion is wholly founded in reaſon, and directed by it; and therefore, when this light, this ſacred and divine light, is not attended to; when imagination, paſſion, and prejudices and falſe conceptions, uſurp the place, and are allowed all that authority and influence, which only belong to truth, and the dictates of a ſober well informed judgment, it muſt unavoidably follow, that the truths of religion will be obſcured by igno-

* See the Nature of Moral Evidence, illuſtrated in fifteen Propoſitions in Ditton's Diſcourſe of the Reſurrection of Chriſt, from p. 123 to 164.

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rance and prejudices, and its native beauty ſullied by extravagance and enthuſiaſm.

But as this is a ſubject of the utmoſt importance, I ſhall here take occaſion to inquire into the moſt conſiderable and general cauſes, by which the light of reaſon is obſcured, and the judgment perverted and enſlaved; cauſes that have been the moſt prevailing in all ages, and which, as long as they are allowed to ſubſiſt, will in all future time have the ſame fatal effect.

I. The firſt of theſe that preſents itſelf to a moſt ſuperficial obſerver, is indolence and inattention: every one muſt acknowledge, that it is not the mere faculty of reaſon that illuminates the mind; but the proper exerciſe and careful improvement of it, by frequent reflection and impartial inquiry: for a man of the moſt ſtrong and extenſive natural abilities, who never thinks nor never examines, cannot be expected to make half the proficiency in divine knowledge as a more deliberate and ingenious inquirer of a much inferior underſtanding; nay his judgment may be as weak and confuſed, for want of proper care to inform it aright, and, thro' a ſhameful negligence, his reaſon may be as groſly fallacious, and his principles as repugnant to common ſenſe, as thoſe that find admittance where human reaſon is in a lower and imperfect ſtate; ſo that indolence, and, which are the neceſſary conſequences of it, lazineſs and ſuperficial examination, are the certain foundation of error and intellectual darkneſs.

II. Another common cauſe of ignorance and miſtakes in our inquiries, is prejudice, which throws a miſt before the underſtanding, and hinders it from diſcerning clearly the evidences, and beauties, and advantages of truth. It gives the judgment a particular and ſtrong bias towards one ſet of principles, which of conſequence are readily admitted as the beſt and moſt rational; and the contrary truths, though of the moſt momentous kind, are as naturally diſcredited and vilified. The arguments by which they are re-

commended are diminiſhed, and conſidered as mere trifles; but the objections againſt them magnified, as deciſive and unanſwerable. Thus will prejudice, though of the moſt groſs and malignant kind, engroſs all the fairneſs, candour, and ſkill in argument to itſelf, and paint on the ſide of truth and reaſon nothing but ſuperficial knowledge, or narrowneſs of mind. The prejudices by which mankind are influenced, are various, but have all the ſame infatuating and blinding quality; for whether it be prejudice ariſing from education or intereſt, or the prejudice of implicit veneration for great names, whom we have been taught to call Rabbi, or an unreſerved ſubmiſſion to human authority; which ſoever of theſe bears the principal ſway, it has always tended to the ſame point, and the effect of it has been this, making men conceited in ignorance, and obſtinate in error.

III. Senſuality is a never-faling means of a darkening and perverting the judgment; for, by inflaming the paſſions, it indiſpoſes the mind for the calm contemplation and purſuit of truth in general. It depreſſes the very faculty of reaſon, and renders it unfit for ſublime exerciſes. It introduces a falſe taſte, and deſtroys the reliſh of mental pleaſures; for ſenſe and reaſon are ſuch contrary principles, that if the gratification of the firſt be our ſurpreme and moſt favourite entertainment, we ſhall regard the latter ſo much the leſs in proportion, and perhaps contract an utter averſion to its employments and exerciſes. But in an uncommon degree does ſenſuality unfit for an impartial ſtudy of religious and moral truth, after which it begets a prejudice of which it muſt needs entertain ſome kind of horror, as of a reprover, a condemner, an awakener of guilty ſuſpicions, and a ſcourge of unlawful exceſſes. To what a ſad condition muſt that man be reduced, whoſe diſpoſition and conduct in a manner force him to dread and fly from thinking, that he may be the more quietly and ſerenely miſerable?

IV. Next

IV. Next to ſenſuality, the moſt univerſal corrupter of good principles, and extinguiſher of reaſon's light, is ſuperſtition. It alarms with panic terrors, and makes a man afraid of free inquiry, as if honeſty, and ingenuity of mind, which are the very eſſence and genuine ſpirit of an acceptable virtue and piety, were crimes that deſerved damnation; and an abject ſlaviſh credulity, which is a reproach to the character of a man, was however the chief excellence and duty of religion, and the ſureſt recommendation to the eſteem and favour of the Diety. Superſtition always proceeds from weakneſs of mind; it ſuppoſes the underſtanding to be diſturbed, and fancy or fear, or preſumption, to have the aſcendant; and as theſe prevail farther, the judgment will be more and more debaſed, and the intellectual darkneſs proportionably increaſed; and when once a man hath brought himſelf to believe in earneſt that the great God of the univerſe is a weak, capricious Being, pleaſed and offended with trifles; that the diſhonouring human reaſon, by ſubſtituting forms, bodily geſtures, or penances, in the room of the reformation of evil habits and inward rectitude, and practiſing ceremonies of devotion, equally abſurd and uſeleſs, is the way in which he chuſes to be ſerved and worſhipped; when once a man has brought himſelf really to believe theſe are great and important points, in which religion conſiſts, he ſeems to have loſt the common principles of reaſon. And it is no wonder to find that ſuperſtition, which abounds in infinite inſtances in a like kind, is loſt in confuſion, and goes on from one degree of folly and extravagance to another, till, in the end, it quite obliterates all rational ſenſe of God, and of his worſhip, and the very natural conſcience of good and evil. Falſe notions of God, the baſis and ſupport of ſuperſtition, are fundamental errors, which deſtroy the ground-work of all true judgment about virtue and piety, and on which no ſuperſtructure can be raiſed ſuited to the foundation, that has any thing in it but

weakneſs and falſhood; and therefore, while ſuch errors are unhappily entertained, it is ſcarce poſſible in nature that any other conſequence ſhould follow than this, that, with reſpect to religion, the grand concern of human life, the light that is in us will be total darkneſs †.

Theſe are th principal cauſes of that ignorance and error that have ſo much prevailed in the world; but there are a variety of others, which are either preventive of inquiry, or impediments that obſtruct the acquiſition of truth; which though I would not be tedious in expatiating upon, yet the mention of ſome of them may have its uſe.

Firſt, the want of forming in our minds ſome proper principles and rules of judging concerning truths in general or particular. Want of due reflection upon thoſe ideas we have, or may have, and uſing words and phraſes that have no fixed determinate ideas, and conſequently muſt be deſtitute of that knowledge which might otherwiſe be gained from the contemplation of them and their relations. Attempting to judge of things quite above our reach, whereby our ideas are confuſed, and aſſert or deny without being at all able to demonſtrate the truth or falſity of the propoſition. Not underſtanding wherein the force of an argument or juſt conſequence conſiſts, from whence it comes to paſs that perſons aſſert ſuch a thing to follow from ſuch a poſition, when it is no axiom, no theorem, no truth, that we know of. Defect of memory and imagination, which is often ſhallow, treacherous, confuſed, and cannot be depended upon. Attending too much to ſenſe; for as neceſſary as our ſenſes are to us, there are certainly many things which fall not within their notice; many which cannot be exhibited after the manner of ſenſible objects, and to which no images belong. Want of retirement, and the practice of thinking and reaſoning by ourſelves: Truth is the offſpring of ſilence, unbroken meditation,

† Abſtract from Dr. Foſter of Revealed Religion, vol. I.

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and thoughts often reviſed and corrected. A fondneſs for our own opinions, in which we chanced to be educated, that have been inculcated by parents or tutors, that have the ſtamp of antiquity, or the ſanction of public authority. For theſe reaſons, if they may be called ſuch, many have not only ſhewn an indifference as to true principles, but have refuſed even to hear any arguments againſt their favourite imbibed opinions; though, for the ſame reaſon, had they been born in an idolatrous, Mahommedan, or Popiſh country, they muſt have been of the religion in which they were educated. Laſtly, if perſons of this turn of mind have at any time permitted the ſound of truth in their ears, and have been led to think or inquire at all, it has been ſo ſuperficial, and under the influence of ſuch prepoſſeſſion and bigotry, as have proved the hinderance of their illumination and conviction.

But perhaps it will be aſked, are there not many difficulties that obſtruct the acquiſition of truth in general, involuntary and unavoidable, ariſing from the depravity of human reaſon? Reaſon, it is ſaid, which was once the dignity and glory of human nature, is now depraved, weakened and enfeebled by our original defection, ſo that it is at beſt a very uncertain guide with reſpect to truth or happineſs. But however depraved and diſabled by the fall, he is ſtill capable of diſcerning what is right or wrong in every caſe which properly concerns him; man is ſtill capable of extending his inquiries very far into other concerns; can ſearch deep into the receſſes of nature, and by ſteady careful inquiry, joined with experience, explain many abſtruſe points in the ſyſtem of the univerſe, and illuſtrate the wiſe laws and wonderful diſpoſitions of providence; and can it be imagined that our own proper duty as men, and truths that are of importance for us to know, are placed beyond the reach of our underſtanding? This would be rendering the ſtate of man deplorable indeed, and reflect on the wiſdom and care of

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the Divine Providence. And as to the doctrines and duties of revelation, they must be capable of arriving at the true sense of these too, unless it be a revelation unrevealed; taking it for granted, as it is clearly a doctrine of the New Testament, that whatever degrees of divine assistance is necessary in aid to our faculties, they are always afforded to the diligent and well-disposed. If it should be asked, how can we possibly know that those inward impressions that we feel, are really divine? The answer must be, from their correspondence with the eternal revelation, and with the light and dictates of reason. And from hence it will follow, that, in the present state of our faculties, however impaired and disordered, we are capable of acquiring a deep and lively impression of moral and divine truths. For is it out of the power of a man to consider seriously? Is it beyond his natural abilities, to reflect often on affairs of the utmost consequence? Can he have a just theory of the Christian religion, and at the same time not be convinced of its intrinsic excellence, and infinite importance? Such an insinuation as this redounds as little to the credit of christianity, as to the honour of human nature.

Should it be said that man, by the original bias of his nature to evil, and its aversion to what is good, is necessarily disinclined to, and indisposed for reflection on such subjects as these; I answer, the strongest disinclination does by no means infer an utter impossibility; nay, the contrary is most evident: for let the indisposition be equal to what is suggested in the objection, man must still be a free agent, and have it in his power to be either virtuous or vicious, or else he is absolutely incapable both of religion and moral government; and can we imagine that our nature is so odd, and so defective a composition, as to be capable of forming many good resolutions, and of rectifying many errors of conduct in civil life, and, at the same time, indisposed and unable to act the part of a rational, moral

moral and intelligent being, in matters of a religious nature?

Here it may be proper to take notice of the principal cauſes of corruptions in chriſtianity, which are generally urged as another ſource of difficulty in the ſearch after religious truth, and in the ſtudy and right underſtanding the ſcriptures, in a way of private judgment.

When chriſtianity was firſt promulgated to the world, it ſtood upon the principles of reaſon and common ſenſe; and happy would it have been for mankind, if they had but ſuffered it to remain upon this foundation. But men were no ſooner drawn over to it, than, deſerting their natural notions of things, they began to explain it upon artificial notions. The great misfortune was, that many of its firſt converts came from the ſchools of the philoſophers; and being prepoſſeſſed with fantaſtic opinions and ſyſtems of their own, they began to garniſh, and new-model it, according to every man's taſte and humour. A plain, ſimple religion, ſuch as the Chriſtian, founded upon the principle of reaſon and common ſenſe, was too inſipid of itſelf, and wanted ſeaſoning with philoſophy, before it could be reliſhed by thoſe primitive prelates. Here was the foundation of every hereſy, and the ſource of all that ſpurious mixture, which corrupted the purity of the goſpel, ſo ſoon after its eſtabliſhment. The philoſophy of Plato was the firſt in vogue amongſt Chriſtians; and this ſeems to have happened, not only becauſe this philoſophy was imagined to bear ſome diſtant reſemblance to chriſtianity; but alſo becauſe it was the beſt calculated to flatter that enthuſiaſtic turn of mind, which unhappily prevailed in thoſe early times.

If then we would ſhew ourſelves wiſe men and good Chriſtians, let us be concerned only for truth; and in order to find it, conſider calmly, and examine impartially; let not indolence enervate and ſtupify our minds, let not prejudice captivate and enſlave us; let

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not ſenſuality unfit us for intellectual exerciſes, let not ſuperſtition make us weak and childiſh, and taint all our principles, with reſpect to the very eſſentials of religion; but rather let us cultivate an honeſt candid temper, and let the evidences of truth have an unbiaſſed influence on our minds.

Some general OBJECTIONS *to* FREE INQUIRY, *anſwered.*

Obj. 1. THAT the obſcurity in which the fruitful imaginations of men have buried many truths, eſpecially in chriſtianity, has made divinity ſo difficult a ſcience, as to render many parts of it unintelligible to the generality of Chriſtians.

Anſ. Mankind, however depraved and diſabled by the fall, which ſome are very fond of magnifying, are ſtill capable of extending their inquiries very far in many intricate caſes, reſpecting their own civil concerns, and thoſe of others; and conſequently can be under no incapacity of inveſtigating truths of importance, which muſt neceſſarily as nearly concern them. "Notwithſtanding all the pretended incapacity, they are capable of deſcerning what their duty is, and wherein their true happineſs conſiſt; they can ſearch deeply into the receſſes of nature, by ſtudy and careful inquiry joined with experience. They are able to explain many abſtruſe parts of the ſyſtem of the univerſe, and to illuſtrate the wiſe laws and wonderful diſpoſitions of providence; and can it be imagined, that their own proper duty as men is beyond the reach and comprehenſion of their underſtanding? Can it be conceived that their own happineſs is ſo perplexed and inſcrutable a ſubject, that they can form no clear and ſettled judgment concerning it? Deplorable then is the deſtiny of men, and very ungracious ſeems to be the care and providence of their Creator *. But this has been al-

* Dr. Foſter's Sermon, vol. iii. p. 299.

ready

ready taken notice of. Beſides, if truth is liable to ſuffer by the diſguiſe and falſe gloſſes put upon error, there is the more reaſon to bring all propoſitions to the ſtandard of truth, and to certain principles and rules of judging concerning them.

Obj. 2. That free inquiry and controverſy in religion have a tendency to divide Chriſtians into ſects and parties, and introduce, not only a diverſity of ſentiments, but oftentimes uncharitable cenſures and animoſity, even among the neareſt friends.

Anſ. As all are bound to think about religion, ſo it is impoſſible that all ſhould think alike; but their thoughts will unavoidably iſſue in different ſentiments and opinions. This has been manifeſtly the caſe in all ages; men have always had different opinions about religion, ſuch, at leaſt, as have had the liberty to make uſe of their reaſon and judgment in it. This no doubt was the caſe of the apoſtles themſelves, in things wherein they were not immediately inſpired or directed. And how manifeſtly was it the caſe of others of the firſt Chriſtians? Some believed they might eat all things; others, that were weak, believed that they might eat only herbs. Some eſteemed one day above another, others eſteemed every day alike, Rom. xiv. 2. 5. Some were for Paul, others for Apollos, &c. and it would be needleſs to ſhew there was the like difference amongſt Chriſtians in the following ages of the church, whilſt we have the tranſactions of their ſynods and councils, and ſo many volumes of their controverſies, and whatever may be inferred from thence to the prejudice of free enquiry, men may and do generally agree in all eſſential points; and it cannot be the duty of perſons under a ſtate of imperfection, as ours is, to think alike; for, to ſay nothing of the different meaſures of mens faculties, what a ſtrange turn does education give to their minds, even when there is ſomething of equality as to natural endowments? Their underſtandings are not tutored and brought up,

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as I may expreſs it, the ſame way; the different maſters they have ſat under, the different books that have been put into their hands, the different company they have kept, and converſation they have had, the various ſubjects their thoughts have been employed upon (which have been repreſented to them by their catechiſts, teachers, tutors, in a very different light) will neceſſarily determine them to different judgments and apprehenſions; in ſhort, there is ſcarce a greater variety in voices and features, than there is in ſentiments and opinions in the mere ſpeculative points of religion, nor can this be avoided without a miracle, or conſtant univerſal inſpiration*; and this has led the pious and well-diſpoſed of every denomination, as well as thoſe eminent in learning, to place the eſſentials or fundamentals of religion in a few neceſſary articles, of which we ſhall take notice. However, this is certain, that Jeſus Chriſt hath provided no other remedy againſt errors, or a diverſity of opinions, than reaſon and argument, offered with meekneſs and charity. We may propoſe truth with all poſſible advantage, recommend it by all proper arguments, and thereby endeavour to reclaim the erroneous; but when we cannot in this way of the goſpel prevail with our miſtaken brethren, we muſt leave them to God and their own conſcience †.

Obj. 3. But our inquiries, it is urged, are unneceſſary; we are to take knowledge from the prieſts lips. It is an inſtance of preſumption to pretend to underſtand and judge for ourſelves in matters of a religious nature, and thereby call in queſtion the ſuperior judgment and authority of thoſe who are appointed the miniſters of the goſpel over us. And does it not ſavour of pride to oppoſe our judgment of any point to the judgment of general councils, convocations, and all the learned members and decrees of the church?

* Bennet's Irenicum. † Ibid,

Anſ.

Anſ. This, ſays Dr. Whitby *, is that pride which thoſe 7000, who would not bow the knee to Ball, were guilty of, in oppoſition to the generality of the Iſraelites, who had agreed ſo to do. It was ſuch an inſtance of preſumption, as was practiſed by thoſe Jews who believed in Chriſt, and acknowledged him to be the Meſſiah, againſt the ſentence of the great Sanhedrim, and of thoſe Scribes and Phariſees who ſat in the chair of Moſes. The ſame diſpoſition was alſo the foundation of the reformation of the church of England, and of all Proteſtant churches. The doctrines and ſuperſtitious practices they renounced, being confirmed by many general councils, as agreeable to ſcripture, or confirmed and handed down to them by catholic tradition, and which all Chriſtians have a peculiar obligation to, as they would not prejudice the purity of the faith, which was once delivered to the ſaints, and hold faſt the profeſſion of it without wavering.

Many points of the Chriſtian doctrine are not mere matters of ſpeculation, in which perſons of different denominations are divided in their ſentiments; but many of them are equally the concern of all, and will ever remain of ſuch importance, that, till Chriſtians are well acquainted with and confirmed in them, no one can be inexcuſable that has opportunities to inquire, to remain ignorant of them. Such in general are the great principles and rules of human conduct; and what is next to it, are thoſe truths of religion, that have a proper rational influence on our conduct, to animate us in the practice of virtue, and deter us from vice. Of this kind are inquiries concerning our own ſtate and circumſtances, as reaſonable and accountable beings; that God is the moral Governor of his rational creatures; and that there will be a ſtate of futurity, in which will be a righteous retribution, according to men's actions in this life.

* Sermon IV. p. 96, 97, 98.

Obj.

Obj. 4. Is of a very different nature, viz. That faith has no virtue or true merit in it, becauſe we cannot avoid aſſenting to particular truths, when the proofs are clearly diſcerned, and appear to be ſtrong and concluſive; and that we muſt in all caſes believe or diſbelieve, juſt as the evidence appears to our underſtanding.

A. This is at beſt a vague ſuperficial objection; for it depends in a great meaſure upon ourſelves, that things appear to our underſtandings in a true or a falſe light; if this be owing, as it is almoſt univerſally on the one hand, to diligent and mature reflection; and, on the other, to entire neglect or partial inquiry, to criminal prejudices, or ſtrength of corrupt paſſions; it follows of courſe, that in all ſuch caſes, where our right belief ſprings from integrity, and the due exerciſe of our rational powers, and our infidelity or errors from a vicious indulgence and depravity of temper; the one may fitly be rewarded, and the other righteouſly puniſhed; as fitly indeed as any inſtances of moral rectitude, or of corruption and iniquity, that can be mentioned *.

Some OBJECTIONS *to the Study of the* SCRIPTURES, *particularly conſidered.*

THE holy ſcriptures, ſays St. Gregory, *is, as it were, a letter written by God to man*; and we ought therefore to read it with reverence, to weigh it attentively, and learn the will of God from God himſelf; to deſpiſe or neglect ſo extraordinary a bleſſing, were not only an imprudence, but a crime. The reading and meditating on the ſcripture are, ſays St. Bernard, a character of our relation to God, Jeſus Chriſt having himſelf ſaid, He that is of God, heareth God's words. What can we read elſe that can be more a-

* Dr. Foſter of Incredulity, and the Morality of Faith, vol. III. p. 226 to 230.

greeable

greeable than this book? There is no true and ſalutary joy, ſays St. Auſtin, but that which ariſes from hope, that hope, moſt eſpecially, whoſe object is the kingdom of heaven. Now, the ſcriptures ſhew us the way thither, and fill the heart with innumerable ſecret delights, whilſt we walk in it, agreeably to what St. Paul ſays, that through patience and comfort of the ſcriptures, our hope becomes more ſteady and reſolved *.

Now, the doctrines and duties of a revelation men muſt be capable of underſtanding the ſenſe of ſo much as is neceſſary, or elſe it is a revelation unrevealed; for to ſuppoſe that a farther ſupernatural and inward illumination, is abſolutely neceſſary to give a right and juſt idea of ſcripture doctrines, is, in effect, to aſſert that the ſcriptures are of no uſe at all; and that the internal teaching, is the only revelation of the mind of God to mankind. But here again a conſiderable difficulty occurs, and that is, how we can poſſibly know that this inward teaching is really divine, but from its correſpondence with the external revelation, and with the light and dictates of reaſon; and conſequently without admitting that the external revelation may be underſtood without it, and that reaſon is the eternal ſtandard of truth.

But there are a variety of difficulties ſtarted, that obſtruct the knowledge of the true ſenſe of ſcripture, which deſerve to be taken notice of in this place.

Obj. 1. It is ſaid the New Teſtament cannot be well underſtood without the Old, which was for the moſt part wrote in Hebrew, and for the underſtanding of which a good knowledge of the oriental language is neceſſary. That a great part of the ſcriptures are wrote in a ſtile extremely figurative; and thoſe figures, ſuch as this part of the world are very great ſtrangers to; and conſequently the verſion of books,

* Lamy's Introduction to the Holy Scripture, Pref. p. 1.

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little underſtood from their language and ſtile, muſt be extremely difficult. And if the knowledge of the Old Teſtament could be diſpenſed with, the language of the New Teſtament is not to be underſtood without much pains. The ſtile indeed, in the hiſtorical part, is plain; yet there are great difficulties in the doctrinal parts. The whole is wrote in the ſtile adapted to the Jews, and the idiom is Hebrew or Syriac, though the words be Greek, which renders ſome knowledge of this language the more neceſſary. I might add, that it requires a good knowledge of the Jewiſh ſtate, at the time of our Saviour's coming; a knowledge of their government, Sanhedrim, ſynagogue worſhip, cuſtoms, traditions, opinions, ſects, &c. A farther difficulty ariſes from the ſublimity of ſome of its peculiar doctrines, and the excellency of ſome of its precepts, as appearing incongruous to their antient maxims, principles, and prepoſſeſſions *.

Anſ. As to the difficulties ariſing from the languages, a common critic will make ſome allowances for the deficiencies and redundancies that might be pointed out in books of ſuch great antiquity, as the books of the Old Teſtament confeſſedly are: and when ſeveral of thoſe books treat of the ſame matters, and relate the ſame facts, a candid reader will ſupply what appears deficient in one, by what appears compleat in the other; and more eſpecially when we can attain to the general view and deſign, make the moſt favourable conſtruction of ſuch as appears harſh and difficult, and content ourſelves with being unable to account for ſome ſeeming contradictions, as in many caſes it may be ſeen to be an omiſſion in the tranſcriber. Thus, 2 Sam. xxiv. 1. it is written, The anger of the Lord was kindled againſt Iſrael, and he moved David againſt them to ſay, Go number Iſrael and Judah. And 1 Chron. xxi. 1. it is ſaid, And Satan

* Abſtracts from Biſhop Hare's Difficulties, &c. that attend the ſtudy of the ſcriptures.

ſtood

ſtood up againſt Iſrael, and provoked David to number Iſrael; and God was diſpleaſed with the thing; v. 7. therefore he ſmote Iſrael. And ſome of the prophecies of ſcripture, with their application, ſeems to ſtand in need of the ſame candid compariſon of ſcriptures, and other circumſtances, to come at the right knowledge of them. The relation given of ſome particulars in our Saviour's life and doctrine, are in ſome minute circumſtances differently related by the Evangeliſts; but in no material and eſſential points.

Secondly, It is plain the orthodox faith is not founded on a nice and critical knowledge of the ſcripture; many of the primitive Chriſtians were no great critics, but argued very much in a myſtical way. Origen in particular, who was the greateſt ſcholar chriſtianity had bred to that time, perpetually turns the letter of ſcripture into allegory; from whence we may reaſonably conclude, that the knowledge of the pure literal ſenſe was, in the judgment of many, even in thoſe times, thought to be of little uſe.

But it is certain, that the original language of the Old Teſtament was known to very few for the firſt ſix centuries, in which thoſe general councils were held, wherein all the articles of the orthodox faith were ſettled; they governed themſelves, and determined all their points by the Greek verſion. Now, if an exact and critical knowledge of the ſcriptures was not neceſſary to the ſettling the faith, it cannot be neceſſary to the underſtanding it, or to the underſtanding thoſe who have wrote in the explication of it: on the contrary, ſuch a knowledge tends to leſſen our eſteem of the fathers of the church, by diſcovering their miſtakes, and muſt weaken our regard to the deciſion of councils, by expoſing the falſeneſs of the ground they ſeem to be built on. A man well ſkilled in the fathers and councils, will often find texts of ſcripture are very inſufficiently or improperly applied; which ſuggeſt

to us another reaſon why it may ſeem that ſuch a ſtudy can do no good *.

Our learned author likewiſe enumerates many other arguments againſt an exact and careful ſtudy of the ſcriptures, as, 1. That the ſubſtance of the orthodox faith is compriſed in the liturgy and articles of the church of England; which is a ſhort way as could be wiſhed for, knowing all that is neceſſary to be known, eſpecially as this will lead to the knowledge of all uſeful truths, without the hazard of falling into any dangerous opinions. 2. As it is a fundamental principle among Proteſtants, that whatever is neceſſary to be believed is plainly revealed in the ſcriptures, and conſequently what is not plainly and clearly revealed in them, cannot be neceſſary: now if what is plain and clear in ſcripture, is the only part neceſſary to be known; then a laborious ſearch into the obſcurer parts may ſeem unneceſſary, to the obtaining a true orthodox faith. 3. Suppoſing the ſtudy of the ſcripture to be neceſſary, that they have been ſufficiently ſtudied already, and if any parts remain obſcure, who can hope to clear up paſſages, that have puzzled ſo many great men, or who will preſume to ſet up his judgment in competition with theirs? 4. That where perſons have attempted a free and impartial ſearch into the literal ſenſe of the ſcriptures, above the reſt of the Chriſtian world, they have ſometimes purchaſed their pretended knowledge of the ſcriptures at the expence of their reputation; and their ſtudy has deſtroyed their orthodoxy, and you will be cenſured as a heretic, a term which there is a ſtrange magic in; though it has no determinate meaning in the mouth of the people; whilſt the orthodox man lives quiet and at eaſe, unmoleſted and unenvied †. 5. It is expected that a man ſhould always adhere to the party he has

* Hare's Difficulties and Diſcouragements, p. 9.

† Our author here mentions two clergymen, and it is natural to conclude he means the reverend Mr. Whiſton and Dr. Clark.

taken,

taken, and that he is all his life bound by the ſubſcriptions made in his firſt years, as if a man was as wiſe at twenty-four, and knew as much of ſcripture and antiquity, as at fifty; and yet if he continues the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, he is not ſure he ſhall continue a year together in the ſame ſentiments. Our author farther enlarges on the danger of diſſenting from the eſtabliſhed doctrines of chriſtianity, even in thoſe times of toleration: and he concludes with ſaying, Do not flatter yourſelf, that temper, prudence and moderation, can, in religious controverſies, get the better of indiſcreet zeal, bigotry and ſuperſtition; in ſhort, be not raſh in eſpouſing opinions, which can have no other effect, but to lay the beſt men at the mercy of the worſt. Every mean perſon, who has nothing to recommend him but his orthodoxy, and owes that perhaps wholly to his ignorance, will think he has a right to trample on you with contempt, and aſperſe your character with violent reflections, without your having the leaſt hopes of being heard in your own defence.

Our worthy prelates, after theſe remarks, and more to the ſame purpoſe, by way of reprehenſion of thoſe miniſters whoſe conduct have run counter to their duty and profeſſion, make theſe candid conceſſions.

After all that has been ſaid, I am perſuaded that many readers will ſtill think what is here advanced, a ſtrange paradox, or perhaps be ſcandalized at it as a very wicked one; and will on no terms allow, that clergymen ſhould lay aſide what ought to be their chief ſtudy. And, to be ingenuous, I will confeſs I am entirely of the ſame mind; I am as unwilling as they can be, to admit the concluſion, that the ſtudy of the ſcriptures ſhould be deſerted; and yet cannot deny, but, humanly ſpeaking, this muſt be the conſequence from the premiſſes. If therefore we will not allow the concluſion, we muſt ſhow the premiſſes to be untrue, and that this ſtudy will not be attended with ſo

much danger. But this we in vain attempt, if we do not our parts at leaſt, that theſe may not be the conſequences. For as long as they are, the ſtudy of the ſcriptures will certainly continue to be neglected, as it now is, and all men who contribute to theſe conſequences in any degree, do ſo far diſcourage the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, whatever they pretend.

In truth, there is nothing more abſurd, than to ſay the glorious things we do daily of the Scriptures; and, at the ſame time, make the ſtudy of them, to men of ſincere and honeſt minds, ſo extremely hazardous and inconvenient. If then we would not be guilty of diſcouraging a ſtudy, which we acknowledge to be the great duty of the clergy, as we are Chriſtians; if we would be true to the fundamental principles of the reformation, as Proteſtants, that the ſcriptures are the only rule of faith; let us uſe our beſt endeavours to remove the great obſtacles that lie againſt the ſtudy of them; let us do what we can, that learned men may have full liberty to ſtudy the ſcriptures freely and impartially; good encouragement given them to go through the labour and difficulties of ſuch a ſtudy, not ſlightly and ſuperficially, but with ſuch application and diligence as the nature of the thing requires; and have leave to ſpeak their ſenſe with all manner of ſafety: that their opinions may be examined fairly and with temper; that their names be not unjuſtly loaded with calumny and ſlander: that their words and actions may be interpreted with the ſame candour, as is ſhown to thoſe that differ from them: that, if what they advance be right, it may be received; if wrong, their errors may be refuted, as the miſtakes of learned men on other ſubjects; if doubtful, and the ſcriptures ſay ſo little, or ſpeak ſo obſcurely, that nothing can certainly be decided either way, that then no body may be obliged to take either ſide as neceſſary: that, whether their notions be right or wrong, their perſons may in all events be ſafe, and

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their maintenance not affected by it: that, as long as they live virtuouſly, and write with all due modeſty, good manners, and advance nothing that breaks in upon morality and government, they be treated in all reſpects as thoſe are or ought to be who employ themſelves in any other part of uſeful learning.

I muſt add, let them be never ſo much in the wrong, I can apprehend no danger from it to the church; or that the errors of a few men, can have any conſiderable influence in oppoſition to a great body of a vigilant and learned clergy, who will be always able and ready to defend the received notions, if they can be defended; and if they cannot, it muſt be allowed they ought not. But if ſome inconveniences would ariſe from the liberty I contend for, they are nothing in compariſon of thoſe that muſt follow from the want of it.

Till there is ſuch a liberty allowed to clergymen, till there is ſuch a ſecurity for their reputations, fortunes and perſons, I fear I muſt add, till ſo difficult a ſtudy meets with proportionable encouragement; it is impoſſible a ſincere, impartial and laborious application to it, ſhould generally prevail: and till it does, it is as impoſſible the ſcriptures ſhould be well underſtood; and till they are, they are a rule of faith in name only. For it is not the word of ſcripture, but the ſenſe, which is the rule; and ſo far as that is not underſtood, ſo far the ſcriptures are not our rule, whatever we pretend, but the ſenſe that men have put on them; men fallible as ourſelves, and who were by no means ſo well furniſhed, as the learned at preſent are, with the proper helps to find out the true meaning of ſcripture. And while we take the ſenſe of the ſcriptures in this manner upon content, and ſee not with our own eyes; we inſenſibly relapſe into the principle of popery, and give up the only ground on which we can juſtify our ſeparation from the church of Rome. It was a right to ſtudy and judge of the

ſcriptures for themſelves, that our firſt reformers aſſerted with ſo good effect; and their ſucceſſors can defend their adherence to them on no other principle.

If then we are concerned for the ſtudy of the ſcriptures, further than in words; if we in earneſt think them the only rule of faith; let us act as if we thought ſo, let us heartily encourage a free impartial ſtudy of them; let us lay aſide that malignant, arbitrary, perſecuting, popiſh ſpirit; let us put no fetters on mens underſtandings, nor any other bounds to their inquiries, but what God and truth have ſet. Let us, if we would not give up the Proteſtant principle, that the ſcriptures are plain and clear in the neceſſary articles, declare nothing to be neceſſary, but what is clearly revealed in them.

Then may we hope to ſee the ſtudy of theſe divine books ſo happily cultivated by the united labours of the learned, when under no diſcouragements, that all may in the main agree in the true meaning of them. Places that can be underſtood, they will agree in underſtanding alike; ſuch at leaſt as are of conſequence to the faith. And for ſuch as are too obſcure to be cleared up with any certainty, thoſe likewiſe they will agree about, and unanimouſly confeſs they are ſuch as no article of faith can be grounded upon, or proved from. Next to underſtanding a text of ſcripture, is to know it cannot be certainly underſtood. When the clear and dark parts of ſcripture are thus diſtinguiſhed, an unity may then reaſonably be hoped for among Proteſtants in neceſſary points; and a difference of opinion in ſuch as are not neceſſary, can have no manner of ill conſequence, nor any way diſturb the peace of the church; ſince there will then be nothing left in its doctrines, o inflame mens paſſions, or feed their corrupt intereſts, when we are all agreed about what is eſſential to religion; and what is not eſſential, is looked on as indifferent; ſo that a man may take one ſide, or the other,

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or neither, or may change, as he ſees reaſon, without offence.

Upon the whole, a free and impartial ſtudy of the ſcriptures, either ought to be encouraged, or it ought not. There is no medium; and therefore thoſe who are againſt one ſide, which ever it be, are neceſſarily eſpouſers of the other. Thoſe who think it ought not to be encouraged, will, I hope, think it no injury to be thought to defend their opinion upon ſuch reaſons as have here been brought for it, till they give better. On the other hand, thoſe who think theſe reaſons inconcluſive, and cannot find better, will find themſelves obliged to confeſs, that ſuch a ſtudy ought to be encouraged; and conſequently muſt take care how they are acceſſary to ſuch practices, as in their natural conſequence cannot but tend to its diſcouragement; leſt they come into the condemnation of thoſe who love darkneſs rather than light, and for their puniſhment be finally adjudged to it. There is in this caſe no other medium between encouraging, and diſcouraging, but what there is between light and darkneſs. Every degree of darkneſs, is a want of ſo much light, and all want of light, is a certain degree of darkneſs. To refuſe then a greater degree of light where it can be had, is in truth to prefer darkneſs; which, in my humble opinion, can never be reaſonable or excuſable. Thoſe who are of another mind, plainly diſtruſt themſelves or their cauſe. Which if it can bear the light, why ſhould it not be ſhown in it? but if it cannot, it is not the cauſe of God, or of the Son of God; for God is light, and in him is no darkneſs; and the Son of God is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world *.

Remarks *on what are ſtiled* Fundamentals.

This is a point I apprehend incapable of being determined, as it muſt neceſſarily depend on, and will ever

* Biſhop Hare.

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vary, according to the circumſtances of perſons; and therefore I ſhall be more conciſe on this head, and give the reader the ſentiments of ſome eminent authors thereon.

Biſhop Uſher ſays, as for the *credenda*, or things neceſſary to be believed, the Creed, called the Apoſtles, contained all articles of that kind, as is manifeſt from the continual practice of the Catholic church. For when ſhe prepared her catechumens for baptiſm, and thereupon received them to that ordinance, and into the Chriſtian church, we cannot reaſonably ſuppoſe ſhe omitted any thing to make them members; and yet all that ſhe required of them to beleive, were the articles of this creed.

As to the *agenda*, or things neceſſary to be done, in order to ſalvation, he ſays, among all the great differences we ſee in the practice of Chriſtians, there are certain fundamental points in which they all agree; as, a deſire to fear God; repentance for ſins paſt, and a ſincere purpoſe of heart, for the time to come, to cleave unto the Lord; which whoſoever have is under mercy, and ought not to be excluded the communion of the faithful Chriſtians *.

With this agrees the doctrine of the church of England, for ſhe requires of thoſe that are to be baptiſed, only to make confeſſion of this faith †.

Hence the judicious Mr. Chillingworth ſays, the main queſtions in this buſineſs are, what revelations are ſimply and abſolutely neceſſary to be propoſed to the belief of Chriſtians, ſo that that ſociety which doth believe them, hath for matter of faith, the eſſence of a true church. And he quotes,

* Archbiſhop Uſher on the Unity of the Church, p. 15, 28.

† Church Catechiſm.

‡ Mr. Chillingworth's Religion of Proteſtants, chap. iv. ſect. 13 pag. 196.

See Dr. Potter on the Creed, p. 215.

Biſhop of London's ſecond Paſtoral Letter, printed in 1730, pag. 15.

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Dr. Potter, who ſays, that what man or church ſoever believes the Creed, and all the evident conſequences of it ſincerely and heartily, cannot poſſibly (if alſo he believes the ſcripture) be in any error of ſimple belief, offenſive to God, nor therefore deſerve for any ſuch error to be deprived of his life, or to be cut off from the communion of the church, and deemed unworthy of ſalvation. And the conſequence is this, which highly concerns the church of Rome, that whatſoever man or church does for any error of ſimple belief, deprive any man ſo qualified as above, either of his temporal life, or livelihood, or liberty, or of the churches communion, and hope of ſalvation, is for the firſt, unjuſt, cruel and tyrannical, ſchiſmatical and preſumptuous; and for the ſecond, uncharitable.

Biſhop Gibſon has delivered his ſentiments on this ſubject with much clearneſs, candour and charity; he ſays, as long as men are men, and have different degrees of underſtanding, and every one a partiality to his own conceptions, it is not to be expected that they ſhould agree in any one entire ſcheme, and every part of it, in the circumſtances, as well as in the things themſelves.

The queſtion therefore is not in general about a difference in opinion, which in our preſent ſtate is unavoidable; but about the very weight and importance of the things wherein Chriſtians differ, and the things wherein they agree; and it will appear that the ſeveral denominations of Chriſtians agree, both in the ſubſtance of religion, and in the neceſſary enforcements to the practice of it: "That the world, and all things in it, were created by God, and are under the direction and government of his powerful hand and all-ſeeing eye; that there is an eſſential difference between good and evil, virtue and vice; that there will be a ſtate of future rewards and puniſhments, according to our behaviour in this life; that Chriſt was a teacher ſent from God, and that the apoſtles were divinely inſpired;

inſpired; that all Chriſtians are bound to profeſs themſelves to be his diſciples; that not only the exerciſe of the ſeveral virtues, but belief in Chriſt, is neceſſary in order to their obtaining the pardon of ſin, the favour of God, and eternal life; that the worſhip of God is to be performed chiefly by the heart in prayers, praiſes and thankſgiving; and as to all other points, that they are bound to live by the rules which Chriſt and his apoſtles have left them in the holy ſcriptures. Here, ſays this right reverend prelate, is a fixed, certain uniform rule of faith and practice, containing all the moſt neceſſary points of religion, eſtabliſhed by a divine ſanction, embraced as ſuch by all denominations of Chriſtians, and in itſelf abundantly ſufficient to preſerve the knowledge and practice of religion in the world.

Profeſſor Turretin, of Geneva, has laid down the following principles to diſtinguiſh fundamentals,

I. That we are not under a neceſſary obligation to know, or believe any truth, but what is clearly revealed unto us, and for the belief of which God hath endowed us with neceſſary abilities.

II. That he alone who is Lord of life and death, that is, God, has power to determine what is neceſſary to be believed, in order to obtain ſalvation; and what error ſhall exclude men from it.

III. Thoſe things likewiſe which flow from theſe principles, by plain and neceſſary conſequence, muſt be added to the catalogue of fundamentals, or things neceſſary to be known.

IV. Fundamentals are plain, adapted to common capacities.

V. They muſt be few in number.

VI. They muſt be often and variouſly expreſſed in ſcripture.

VII. They are principles of, or tending to promote piety.

Finally, with reſpect to ourſelves; our ſafeſt way

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is to guard againſt all errors, as though they were fundamental, and to make the utmoſt progreſs in the knowledge of divine truths; but with regard to others, we ought to pronounce nothing indiſpenſibly neceſſary to ſalvation, but with the utmoſt caution, charity and meekneſs *.

Dr. Foſter, in his definition of fundamentals, ſays, No article can be fundamental, but what is ſo clearly and diſtinctly revealed, as that an ordinary Chriſtian, ſincere in his inquiries, cannot miſs of the knowledge of it.

Secondly, that it is not ſufficient that a propoſition be clearly revealed to make it a fundamental, but the belief of it muſt alſo be made an expreſs term of happineſs in the ſacred writings †.

1. No doctrine is a fundamental, but what is ſo plainly and diſtinctly revealed, as that an ordinary Chriſtian, ſincere in his inquiries, cannot miſs of the knowledge of it. This may be argued from the perfections of God, and the relations he ſtands in to mankind: for certainly their kind Creator and Preſerver cannot but delight in, and ſincerely deſire their happineſs; and therefore it is not to be doubted but that he has done every thing to promote it, which is conſiſtent with his illuſtrious excellence and perfection, and with the wiſdom of his government over free creatures. He cannot have fixed it upon ſuch infinite uncertainties, as that they may fail of obtaining it after the moſt ſincere and diligent uſe of all the means they are capable of uſing, but muſt have made it certainly and infallibly attainable by every one who ſeeks it in the integrity of his heart. What can induce us to think the moſt good-natured Being in the univerſe to be ſuch a hard maſter? Has there been any want of good-

* Turretin's Diſcourſe on Fundamental Art. p. 22 to 30. See alſo Bennet's Irenicum, and Reverend Samuel Bold on church power.

† Dr. Foſter's Diſcourſe of Fundamentals, p. 4.

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neſs in his diſpenſations towards mankind, which might tempt us to entertain ſuch unworthy and injurious thoughts of him? Again, can he who has been at ſuch amazing expence to redeem the human race from that deſtruction which their ſins had merited, and to raiſe our nature to its higheſt perfection of excellence and happineſs; who, that he might be juſt to his being and attributes, and yet juſtify and ſave us, delivered up his Son to death for us all; can he, I ſay, have left it ſo abſolutely precarious, whether poor, illiterate men, (who are the far greateſt part of the world) to whom eſpecially the goſpel was preached, and conſequently to whoſe capacities it ought to have been peculiarly adapted, ſhall, doing their beſt, be happy or miſerable? How then can the grand end of the life, death, reſurrection, and goſpel of his Son be anſwered? Or finally, has he ever been found falſe to his word, or failed of the accompliſhment of his promiſes, that his moſt ſolemn and ſacred declarations of his willingneſs, that all men ſhould be ſaved and come to the knowledge of the truth, ſhould be looked upon as inſincere, and he be repreſented as having promiſed happineſs to the greateſt part of mankind, if not upon abſolutely impoſſible conditions, upon conditions next to impoſſible?

2. It is not ſufficient that a doctrine be clearly revealed to make it a fundamental; but an explicit belief of it muſt be made an expreſs term of happineſs in the ſacred writings. For, without doubt, there are a great many clear propoſitions, which many ſincere, honeſt Chriſtians have no explicit belief of: nor is it neceſſary they ſhould, ſince they are purely incidental, and occaſional; and either do not at all affect chriſtianity in any important points of doctrine, or practice; or if they are of conſequence, it is only as they ſerve to illuſtrate the eſſential, fundamental parts of it, which yet may be believed, though they are never obſerved, or attended to. I grant indeed, that whenever

ever a Chriſtian ſees them to be clearly revealed, he is obliged to believe them: but then it is not becauſe the points of doctrine are in themſelves ſo important, as that mens ſalvation, or damnation, will be determined abſolutely by their knowledge, or ignorance of them; but becauſe they are (as he thinks) in the word of God, who is omniſcient, and ſo cannot be deceived himſelf, juſt and faithful, and ſo cannot impoſe upon his creatures; and there is ſtill this difference between any of theſe propoſitions, and thoſe which are, in the ſenſe above-mentioned, fundamental, that a man may be ſaved without explicit and particular belief of theſe; whereas the others are indiſpenſably neceſſary to be explicitly believed, as being the eſſential, conſtitutive parts of the new covenant.

And now, methinks, it ſhould be paſt diſpute, not only that Chriſt alone, as ſole king of his church, has a right to ſettle, upon what terms thoſe who are willing to become his ſubjects, muſt expect to be protected and rewarded by him; but that theſe terms are expreſsly determined; and particularly, that our Lord, out of his gracious and kind concern for *his church, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood*, *Acts* xx. 28. hath fully and clearly revealed what thoſe truths are, which are of ſuch vaſt importance, as that the happineſs of immortal ſouls depends upon an explicit belief of them, and which therefore it ſo nearly concerns all the members of it to be apprized of. So that we may reſt ſatisfied, that whenever this is not expreſsly ſaid, with relation to any particular doctrine of chriſtianity, miſapprehenſions of that part of the revelations, which contains it, (if we have examined it with ſincerity) will never be brought into the account againſt us at the day of judgment; but if we can be charged with nothing elſe, we ſhall be able to lift up our heads with joy and confidence in that ſolemn and awful day of trial, and ſhall be found perfect and entire, in a goſpel-ſenſe wanting nothing.

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The Right of FREE INQUIRY *and* PRIVATE JUDGMENT.

Religion is a voluntary thing, and a matter of choice; for mankind are beings endowed with reaſon and liberty; and this alone makes them capable of religion and virtue. This muſt be the right of every man who has the free exerciſe of his reaſon, the only faculty which God hath given them by which to judge of truth and falſehood, and to diſcern betwixt good and evil.

What juſt foundation for praiſe is there in a man's being of the true religion? a Chriſtian, ſuppoſe by chance, without knowing the grounds of his religion, and the reaſon of his hope, merely becauſe his anceſtors were Chriſtians, and chriſtianity is the eſtabliſhed religion; upon the ſame foot he might have been of a falſe religion, a Mahommedan, or an Idolater.

Religion therefore is only ſo far praiſe-worthy as it is the matter of our choice; and ſince religion is the means of procuring us acceptance with God, it neceſſarily follows, that every man has an undoubted right to judge for himſelf *.

Every man muſt have a right to judge of the true meaning, and the obligation of thoſe laws that come under his notice; and where the laws of an inferior claſhes with thoſe of a ſuperior, reaſon and conſciouſneſs will point out the proper deference to the laws of a ſuperior. This alone juſtifies the ſeparation from any eſtabliſhment, and deſtroys the principle of force.

Religious truths, ſays Biſhop Hoadley, is what concerns every one. Religion there can be none, without inquiry; for what is contrary to the firſt notions of God, eſtabliſhed upon the evidences of reaſon, cannot be admitted by any one who believes a God upon this evidence, becauſe it deſtroys all thoſe prin-

* Dr. Foſter.

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ciples of reaſon itſelf. What is contrary to the plain deſign or declaration of the goſpel, cannot be received by any one who believes the goſpel, becauſe it deſtroys the authority of the goſpel in which he believes. And what is contrary to the fundamental principles of the reformation, without which it could never have been at firſt, and now cannot conſiſtently be, defended, will not, cannot be received by any true Proteſtant, becauſe it deſtroys his very title to that name, and in the very thing which, as a Proteſtant, he receives *.

None therefore can have any right to impoſe their particular ſenſe of, or authoritatively explain thoſe articles of faith and terms of ſalvation, which Chriſt himſelf hath made. Our inquiries are to determine our aſſent to what appears truth, or to be founded upon rational and ſcripture evidence. This is the Chriſtian's rule, in oppoſition to the receiving or admitting doctrines upon the foot of human authority; in which reſpect we are to call no man maſter upon earth, ſince he is our maſter, even Chriſt. This will evidently appear,

1. From its being inconſiſtent with the dignity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, as head of his church. As ſuch he hath given us laws, and reſerved to himſelf a right of judging our behaviour under them. There is one lawgiver, who is able to ſave or deſtroy; who art thou that uſurpeſt this authority, and judgeſt another?

2. It is deſtructive to the nature of religion, as religion ought to be the reſult of ſuch conceptions as we are able to form of God, and his laws in our minds. An action indeed may look ſpecious; but if it doth not flow from a real conviction of its excellence, if it be not governed by right motives, it loſes both the nature and reward of a religious action. All the expreſſions of our piety, of our reverence, and gra-

* Biſhop Hoadley's Defence of his Sermon againſt the Cenſures of the Committee.

See the Old Whig, or Conſiſtent Proteſtant, in two volumes, publiſhed in 1735.

titude to God, unleſs they ſpring from an inward ſenſe of our obligation, could ſignify nothing in a right eſtimation. They could not amount to a reaſonable ſervice, becauſe not directed by reaſon and underſtanding: to ſubmit blind-fold therefore to the dictates of others, will not conſiſt with the nature of religion. Under this direction it muſt vary with cuſtoms and climates, with prevailing factions, and other incidents of life, i. e. will be juſt nothing beſides a faſhionable dreſs, and an outward form. Neither can we well expect that a religion taken up in ſuch a careleſs manner ſhould be laſting, when it has no other foundation than that of human authority; it will be liable to be ſhaken by every objection, and to be given up with as little reaſon as it was at firſt received: every little difficulty thrown in the way will be apt to bias an indolent mind to reſign it, and the apprehenſion of one error ſhall be taken for a preſumption of more, till an indifference comes on to all religion. This will, I apprehend, be the caſe when a profeſſion of religion is founded upon any thing but a full conviction of its truth and importance. When we have examined impartially, and embraced religion upon proper principles, we are moſt likely to remain ſtedfaſt, and hold faſt that which is good.

3. An abſolute ſubmiſſion of our underſtanding to the ſenſe, which others put upon the words of Chriſt, is ſuch a voluntary neglect of thoſe powers and capacities, with which we are endowed, as muſt incur ſome degree of guilt: to what purpoſe have we underſtanding, reaſon, and a capacity of diſtinguiſhing truth from error, unleſs it be to direct our choice? Why ſhould we be qualified for moral agency, if we are not allowed to exert it in the moſt intereſting affairs of life, viz. our religion? How much ſoever we may pleaſe men, by being ſo obſequious and reſigned, ſurely we cannot pleaſe God, who will expect us to be and do what he has fitted us for. The account

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we muſt render at laſt to our judge, will be a perſonal one; for every man muſt give an account of himſelf to God: there is no pleaſing God then by another man's faith and piety, no appearing at our laſt tribunal by our deputies, we muſt anſwer for ourſelves, and conſequently have a right to direct thoſe meaſures we are ſo ſtrictly accountable for. It is an unalienable right, reſulting from the very frame of our nature and religion. The apoſtles, though they enjoyed extraordinary gifts, aſſumed no ſuch power over the conſciences of men; they left them to the free exerciſes of their own faculties, and commended the Bereans for ſearching the ſcriptures, to ſee what foundation their doctrine had in it*. And St. Paul, in the caſe of ſymbolizing with idolaters, appeals to the Corinthians themſelves, as capable judges, of what (he ſaid) I ſpeak as to wiſe men, judge ye what I ſay †; and expreſsly blames the Coloſſians, for being ſubject to ordinances after the commandments and doctrines of men ‡. The ſame liberty they allowed to others, they claimed for themſelves; they refuſed to comply with the injunctions of the council, not to preach any more in the name of Jeſus, and herein governed themſelves by that important and immutable principle, that they ought to obey God rather than man ‖. In this they went upon a principle, which wiſe men and philoſophers have always acknowledged. Socrates declares to his judges, that if they would give him his life, on this condition, that he ſhould teach philoſophy no more, he would refuſe it: "I love and honour you, O Athenians; but in this I chuſe rather to obey God than you §." And Cicero, to the ſame purpoſe, ſays ¶, when our friends expect from us what is not conſiſtent with honour and virtue, we ſhould let them ſee that we bear a greater re-

* Acts xvii. 12. † 1 Cor. x. 15. ‡ Col. ii. 20. 22.
‖ Acts v. 29. § Plat. Apol. Soc. p. 364
¶ Cic. Off. 3. 11. Milner's Religious Liberty aſſerted, p. 18.

gard to religion than to friendſhip." It is an avowed maxim, amongſt Proteſtants eſpecially, that a law iſſuing from an inferior authority obliges not, when it claſhes with a ſuperior. This alone can juſtify a ſeparation from the eſtabliſhed church, when it is done upon principles of better information. For ſince there is a divine law, importing that every man is to take the beſt care he can of his own ſoul, and muſt give an account of himſelf to God; whoever is verily perſuaded that he beſt anſwers this end, by worſhipping God in a Proteſtant diſſenting congregation, not only may, but is obliged to follow that courſe, which upon trial he finds moſt for his ſpiritual advantage. Again, this condemns thoſe who make the civil law, or the law of the country where they live, the rule of their conſcience in matters of right and wrong; for the thing to be conſidered is not what the law of men permit; but what the law of God, natural or revealed, determines in any caſe *. So likewiſe we find that in lawful things St. Paul claimed a right to judge of their expediency in reſpect to time, or the effect his conduct might have upon others: wherein he declares he would ſubmit himſelf to the direction and judgment of no man but himſelf; all things are lawful but one, but all things are not expedient; all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any †. This was the principle he went upon both with regard to himſelf and others; let every man be fully perſuaded in his own mind ‡. Thus the apoſtles conſidered the religion of Jeſus, as the cauſe of God and of truth, that needed no colouring to heighten its beauty, no mean arts and diſguiſe to ſupport its influence; they went forth to propagate the goſpel, armed with truth, integrity and patience; and preached the goſpel with ſuch an open freedom, as ſhewed they feared no inquiry and examination, that was fair and

* Grove's Syſtem, vol. II. p. 112. † 1 Cor. vi. 12.
‡ Rom. xiv. 5.

impartial;

impartial; and ever ſince we ſee that chriſtianity hath ſtood the teſt, and preſerved its credit againſt all the attempts of art and violence.

Again, an implicit regard to the interpretations and dictates of others is not conſiſtent with that veneration and eſteem we ought to have for the holy ſcriptures. Nothing appears more evident than that they were deſigned for common uſe and inſtruction. This particularity appears from their being written in their then vulgar tongue; from their addreſs to the common people, and the expreſs acknowledgment of the perſons concerned in them. With reſpect to the Old Teſtament, our Saviour encouraged the reading of them, and imputed the errors of the Sadducees about the reſurrection to their ignorance of the ſcriptures*. St. Paul aſſerts, that what were written aforetime were written for our learning †. With reſpect to the New Teſtament, St. John declares, that he wrote his goſpel, that we might believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt ‡; St. Luke his for the inſtruction of Theophilus §. St. Paul inſcribes his epiſtles to whole churches, and directs that his epiſtles be read to all the brethren; and injoins the Coloſſians, that the epiſtles he wrote to them and the Laodiceans might be communicated to one another for their mutual comfort ‖: and St. Peter informs us, that his deſign in writing his epiſtles was to ſtir up the minds of Chriſtians, by way of remembrance, that they might be mindful of the words which were ſpoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apoſtles of the Lord and Saviour **. And it is evident from the epiſtles themſelves, that they contain ſuch doctrines as are expreſsly mentioned in the goſpels, or fairly conſiſtent with them, i e. ſuch as we might expect from thoſe who were deſigned by our Saviour to give a fuller account of his religion. From hence it appears, that the ſcriptures were deſign-

* Mat. xxii. 29. † Rom. xv. 4. ‡ John, xx. 31.
§ Luke i. 34. ‖ 1 Theſ. v. 17. ** 2 Peter, iii. 12.

ed for common uſe; and this evidently implies, that God has revealed his will there with ſufficient plainneſs in all important points, or believe what is more abſurd, that he has given us a revelation that wants another to explain it; and of conſequence it muſt be every man's right to have the free uſe of the ſcriptures, and a liberty of judging of the true meaning of them, and of receiving the doctrines and principles of Chriſtianity from an inward conviction and full perſuaſion of their truth, reaſonableneſs, and excellency, and not received as the effect of chance, cuſtom, intereſt, implicit faith, or any other motive beneath the dignity of the Chriſtian religion *.

From hence we may reaſonably draw ſome arguments in favour of free and candid debate on matters of inquiry on religion. The great author of nature having given us certain powers and faculties, whereby we are enabled to judge between truth and error, we conceive it is a duty incumbent on us to apply theſe powers to that generous purpoſe for which they were deſigned, eſpecially as we may reaſonably expect that this very inquiry after truth ſhould be of ſome ſervice to us, in order to our advancement in virtue, as it has a moſt apparent tendency to promote a ſpirit of integrity and impartiality, and, above all, a ſpirit of charity. For it ſhould be obſerved, that there is not only a natural inquiſitiveneſs in mankind, but alſo a natural ſanguineneſs to ſupport their reſpective tenets; and hence, for want of attending to that common right, which every one has of thinking for himſelf, infinite uncharitableneſs, harſh cenſure, moroſe or ſhy behaviour, have unhappily prevailed. Now, whatever tends to baniſh this narrow and unſocial ſpirit out of the world, muſt be allowed greatly beneficial to mankind in common. And ſince the ſame reaſons that prove inquiry reaſonable, implies that we ought to uſe all the means within our power for information, I am inclined

* Conſult on this ſubject Dr. Watts's Logic, p. 225. & ſeq.

to

to think every unbiaſſed reader will admit a free friendly debate is one proper expedient for the acquiſition of truth; eſpecially as oftentimes it affords an opportunity of hearing ſuch objections advanced by our opponents, as we were not only ignorant of before, but often furniſh us with the proper anſwer to thoſe objections, by another hand, which our then preſent ſuperficial inquiry into that point had not ſuggeſted to us. A perſon, in his ordinary connections and intercourſe with others, will ſometimes unhappily fall into the company of perſons, where he may have his faith perhaps defrauded of its proper ſupports, by means of ſome ſubtil reflections, and probably be hardly able to ſtand the ſhock; whilſt the diligent inquirer after truth, from the advantages he has reaped from converſation with the judicious, and frequent debate on the ſubject of inquiry, will be able to vindicate the cauſe of truth, and not only anſwer the ſubtil objections of his adverſaries, but ſilence, and perhaps convince his opponent. This may be illuſtrated by an application of it to the right of private judgment, the eſtabliſhing rational religion in the room of ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm, but will be found of equal uſe to aſcertain and enforce the genuine principles and duties of our holy religion againſt ſceptics and deiſts. This will be farther conſidered under the advantages of free inquiry *.

The reaſon of man is as little able to ſtand by itſelf, or proceed alone through the ſeveral branches of uſeful ſcience, as his perſonal ſtrength is to defend himſelf againſt the violence of every invader: for both theſe ends he ſtands in need of the counſel and aſſiſtance of others. The commerce of ſcience and learning is as naturally advantageous for defence, ornament or improvement, as any of the common conveniencies of life. Nature ſeems to point out to us the neceſſity of ſuch a communication of knowledge, by diſtributing to different perſons, taſtes and capacities for different

* Watts's Improvement of the Mind, p. 124.

inquiries and ſcience, which through the imperfect nature of man cannot be compleated at once, owes its progreſſion to theſe very cauſes, that not being obliged continually to renew the labour of invention, we improve upon the ſtock of others, and daily increaſe the precious depoſit. This is the only patrimony which can deſcend from one mind to another; and which, whatever it is that we derive from our anceſtors, if we are not unjuſt or idle managers, we ſhall tranſmit with freſh improvements to poſterity. It is likewiſe what we impart to others without envy, and grow richer by an exchange of thoughts and conceptions. This communication of our ſentiments with each other's, and freely canvaſſing the various ſubjects of religion, philoſophy and letters, whether by converſation or writing, I call debate and controverſy; and affirm it to be the moſt natural and uſeful inſtrument of knowledge*.

Here it may be proper firſt to take notice of ſome of the principal ABUSES *of* FREE ENQUIRY.

It is the obſervation of Dr. Foſter, that there is not a more valuable bleſſing in human life than liberty. Civil liberty is the baſis of all ſocial happineſs; and liberty of conſcience, the only foundation of a rational religion. When the latter is reſtrained, we are treated rather like brutes than men, i. e. creatures endowed with moral powers, and accountable for actions: and therefore, it is one of the chief excellencies of the Chriſtian religion, and very far from the air and ſpirit of an impoſture, that it preſerves the rights of conſcience ſacred and inviolable. But, becauſe the world is apt to run into extremes, the writers of the New Teſtament, like perſons who had a thorough knowledge of human nature, have taken care in this reſpect, as well as in all others, to guard againſt exceſs and irregularity. Thus St. Paul adviſes the Galatians not to

* Library 467.

miſtake

miſtake licentiouſneſs for Chriſtian liberty; or in other words, not to imagine, that becauſe they were freed from the expenſive and burthenſome obſervances of the Moſaic inſtitution, which are elegantly deſcribed as a ſtate of ſervitude, they were diſcharged likewiſe from moral obligations, which are an eternal and immutable law to all rational beings. I ſhall enquire into ſome of the chief abuſes of *free-thinking*, by which it happens, that what is really the peculiar *honour* and greateſt advantage of our intelligent nature, becomes a reproach to it, and is attended with moſt injurious conſequences. And,

1. Embracing the principle of liberty, has ended with many in infidelity, or a diſbelief of all religion. It is moſt evident, that infidelity never more abounded than in this age of *free inquiry:* and thoſe who are moſt looſe in their ſentiments with reſpect to the obligations of religion in general, and of Chriſtianity in particular, are, in profeſſion at leaſt, enemies to bigotry and implicit faith. Nay, it may be allowed further, that it is likely they would never have gone ſuch a length as to throw off all religion, if they had continued in a blind attachment to the principles of their education, and to eſtabliſhed and popular opinions. Whence now can this ariſe? We who believe, that religion, in all the parts of it, is ſtrictly rational, can never allow that it is the natural conſequence of a free and impartial examination of it; but muſt ſuppoſe, on the contrary, that the more thoroughly it is conſidered, and the more nicely weighed in the balance of true and unbiaſſed reaſon, it will be the more heartily believed and ſubmitted to. This melancholy event may however be ſufficiently accounted for from other cauſes; and that it not only may, but oftentimes does proceed, not from a ſuperior underſtanding, or more adequate and enlarged views of things, but from ignorance, ſuperficial inquiry, and even from that prejudice and implicit faith, which the monopolizers of reaſon and free-

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thinking ſo loudly diſclaim. I would not be thought, by any thing I am now advancing, to diſcourage the moſt rational and free examination of all religious principles, be they ever ſo ſacred and venerable, and tranſmitted down with ever ſo much awe and ſolemnity by our forefathers; nor would I be thought to aſſert, that any man is obliged to receive a revelation, which, upon mature deliberation, appears to be unworthy of God, and repugnant to the reaſon and nature of things: for my only deſign is to point out ſome falſe principles, which are all an abuſe of the true principle of liberty; and by which it is highly probable, many of the profeſſed admirers, and zealous eſpouſers of it, have been led to a diſregard both of revealed and natural religion.

2. Another abuſe of the principle of liberty is this, that ſome men ſeem to think, that becauſe they have a right to reject all pretended principles of religion, which are contrary to reaſon, to the perfections of the ſupreme Being, and the eternal laws of piety and virtue, they may likewiſe throw off the belief of every thing that they cannot fully account for; and are no more obliged, for example, to believe a Providence, becauſe the viſible courſe of things is perplexed and intricate, full of diſorder and ſeeming injuſtice, and not ſuch as they imagine it would be, if the univerſe was governed by an abſolutely wiſe and good Being; than they are to receive ſuch doctrines as aſſert that God is a rigorous, ſevere, and inexorable Sovereign, one that delights in the miſery of his creatures, and deſtroys the neceſſary and unalterable diſtinction between moral good and evil. This, I ſay, is another too common abuſe of the principle of liberty, leading to a diſbelief even of the firſt principles of natural religion; an abuſe that argues great *narrowneſs* of mind, and is what perſons of any *compaſs* and *freedom* of thought cannot be guilty of †.

† Dr. Foſter of the Abuſes of Free-thinking, vol. I. p. 127 & ſeq.

3. Some

3. Some again ſeem to miſtake liberty for a right to diſpute every thing, and cavil at all religious principles, which are commonly received, merely to ſhew that they are free-thinkers; the great delight of theſe people, who are often to be met with, is to puzzle a controverſy, and ſtart objections againſt ſome point or other of revealed religion; not from a deſire of having them *conſidered* and *ſolved*, but either to ſhew their *parts*, or for the ſake of embarraſſing and diſtreſſing weak minds, who having, perhaps, neither capacity nor leiſure for cloſe thinking, cannot ſee through the ſophiſtry of their pretended arguments. Such perſons are, generally ſpeaking, the furtheſt that can be from *freedom* and largeneſs of mind: for either they will not ſtay to hear their objections confuted, which is the leaſt that can be expected from a *candid* and *ingenious* ſpirit; or, if they are gravelled and confounded, make a ſhift to forget it ſoon, and repeat the ſame empty cavils over again to the next company they meet, with as much unconcernedneſs and aſſurance as if they had never received any anſwer to them. Whether theſe men are really in *ſentiment* againſt religion, or whether they diſpute only for their *diverſion*, or from a *talkative* humour, or an odd affectation of an uncommon ſpirit of liberty, I will not take upon me to determine. However this be, they cannot take it amiſs, if they are ranked on the ſide of *infidelity*, becauſe they are always talking againſt religion, but never defending it.

4. It is an abuſe of liberty to proſtitute it to the mean and narrow view of a party-ſpirit. If the right of judging for ourſelves was the only concern, why could not men be content to uſe it for themſelves, and encourage the impartial exerciſe of it in others? But to urge it only with a view to procure attention, and thereby gain an opportunity of ſtarting difficulties, and of recommending a particular ſet of writers; to urge it on purpoſe to unſettle mens principles, diſturb ſociety, or ſecure ſome private ends, this is to act a low

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ungenerous part. If any thing honourable was aimed at, why could this not be done without abuſe? Is it not perfectly abſurd to contend for the right of judging for ourſelves, and at the ſame time to reproach thoſe who uſe that right (and happen to differ from us) with weakneſs, impartiality, and implicit faith; as if nobody was free, but in a particular way of thinking, and no other evidence could be given of it, but the cavilling at received opinions, and renouncing the principles of Chriſtianity; as if every one was enſlaved by prieſts, who reaſoned in favour of the mediatorial ſcheme, or deſerved to be ridiculed, who adhered to his Bible? This is not reaſoning, but raving, the true ſpirit of faction, and the very eſſence of bigotry. To contend for liberty in this manner is quite to miſtake it, and make the plea for it an introduction only to a new and worſe ſervitude *.

5. Another abuſe of the principle of liberty is this, that it has led many who have not proceeded ſo far as a downright diſbelief of all religion, to pay no regard, or at moſt but a ſlight and trifling regard to *inſtrumental* and poſitive duties. But from hence it has been inferred, that the inſtrumental duties of piety are not only *unneceſſary*, but *hurtful*; and that an inward veneration and eſteem of the Deity, improved by frequent and ſerious meditation, is ſufficient, without any outward ſtated acts of worſhip, and all that is fit for us to peform, or our Maker to expect: but how does this follow, is it a juſt concluſion, that becauſe ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm are miſchievous things, therefore a rational devotion, that is allowed to have no goodneſs in it, but as it is ſubſervient to moral purpoſes, cannot be helpful to us in purſuit of virtue. By no means: To preſerve a ſenſe of God and his providence in the world, is a deſign that I ſhould think ought to be approved by all wiſe and good men. The giving thoſe publick honours to the Deity, has a direct

† Milner's Religious Liberty aſſerted.

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tendency this way, and is as really the concern of natural as revealed religion: to neglect theſe publick teſtimonies of our reverence and gratitude, on a pretence of liberty, doth not imply an exemption from the obligations of the divine authority and law. We then act freely, in every ſenſe of the word, when we act on the ſide of reaſon and piety. When we adore the Author of our beings, and aſpire in the offices of religion, to a reſemblance of his perfect purity and happineſs: if this conduct proceeds from an opinion of our ſuperior knowledge and goodneſs, we muſt certainly forget what is the preſent condition of human nature. The beſt furniſhed mind, I apprehend, is not ſo equally attentive in all ſeaſons, as to want no admonition; nor the ſtrongeſt virtue ſo perfect as to be above advice and encouragement. We may therefore infer, that the right of judging for ourſelves is not inconſiſtent with the uſe of any help or aſſiſtance; nor is inſtruction impoſition, but a ſuitable means of improving our faculties in the acquiſition of truth.

Again, freedom of thought, and impartial inquiry into the principles of religion, have been abuſed and perverted, in the preſent age, by degenerating into a light, trifling frame of mind, and a humour of treating ſacred things with *ridicule*. With people who affect this way, liberty is nothing elſe but a free, bold manner of treating all ſubjects ludicrouſly, and turning them into a jeſt. They have a great inclination to ſhew their wit, eſpecially upon points that afford the leaſt room for it: for this diſcovers an uncommon genius; and therefore becauſe religion is the graveſt thing in the world, they reſolve to be merry with it; and think it a moſt meritorious action to laugh at what the generality of the world eſteem and reverence, and endeavour to put all the wiſe and virtuous part of mankind out of countenance. But ſuch empty triflers ought to know, that there can be no true wit which has not reaſon for the foundation of it; that ridiculing what is

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in itſelf good, uſeful and venerable, fixes a certain reproach upon him that attempts it, either upon his underſtanding or his morals; that jeſting with things of the higheſt conſequence is folly and madneſs; that it is an eaſy matter, by miſrepreſenting, to make any thing appear ridiculous; and conſequently, that this talent is ſo far from being a demonſtration that the perſon who poſſeſſes it is a wit, as it is from being an evidence of his good-breeding, that, in violation of all the rules of decency, he banters and treats with ſcurrility the eſtabliſhed religion of his country, and that which all around him have a high value for.

Laſtly, the greateſt abuſe of free inquiry, is when it degenerates into licentiouſneſs, or is the occaſion of ſin. Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty, only uſe not your liberty for an occaſion to the fleſh, Gal. v. ver. 13. The apoſtle had aſſerted the Gentiles right to the bleſſings of the goſpel, without being under any obligation to ſubmit to circumciſion. But when he declared their liberty in one point, he would not have them extend it to every other; that becauſe they were free from ritual laws, they ſhould preſently conclude themſelves free from moral obligations, and under that pretence run themſelves into licentiouſneſs and immorality. No more ought the liberty we claim againſt the impoſitions of men, weaken our regards for the commandments for God: no notion of liberty ſhould ever tempt us to break through the obligations of virtue, and the reſtraint of divine fear: no pretence of reaſoning for ourſelves, ſhould be carried ſo far as to reaſon ourſelves out of our religion. This would be a ſad caſe indeed, as it would plunge us into the worſt of ſlaveries, that of ſin; and *while they promiſe themſelves liberty, they themſelves are the ſervants of corruption*, 2 Pet. ii. 19 *.

We ſhall now take a view of ſome *advantages of free inquiry*.

* Milner before cited.

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The duty and advantage of free inquiry is neceſſarily implied in the nature of conſciouſneſs, and muſt be allowed in order to eſtabliſh to every man the religious privilege of following his own perſuaſion.

If I have powers and faculties, which render me capable of conſideration and reflection, it is an inſtance or duty of moral virtue, that I ſhould employ my power and faculties for this end and purpoſe; and the fitneſs of this inſtance of moral virtue, conſiſts in this, viz. the certain and evident relation that the having reaſonable powers bears to the regular and proper uſe of them *. And ſuch a faith as is built only on proper and ſufficient evidence, muſt require a greater ſhare of reflection and deliberate inquiry, than where the proofs are ſuch as render conviction and belief neceſſary; that it argues greater ingenuity and probity of mind; that it has more difficulties to ſurmount, and ſtronger prejudices to conquer; that it is in a great meaſure voluntary, and depends upon our care and application; all which circumſtances contribute to render faith a moral virtue †.

The knowledge of religion is without diſpute and compariſon the moſt uſeful knowledge, both with reſpect to ſociety in general, and to every particular member thereof, as conducing moſt to the happineſs of every individual, as well as the public good; and conſequently the ſtudy of this knowledge muſt be of the moſt importance. Nor can religious truth be at all injured by ſubmitting it to a free and open impartial inquiry ‖, even thoſe which are moſt difficult and abſtruſe in their nature; but inquiry will enable us to diſcover and detect the cunning and ſophiſtry by which they are miſrepreſented.

It is a natural conſequence of inquiry, that it opens the mind, and prepares it for the impreſſions of truth;

* Dr. Samuel Chandler's immutable Difference, p. 291.
† Dr. Foſter's Morality of Faith, vol. III. p. 228.
‖ See Dr. Lowth's Viſitation Sermon at Durham, 1758.

for

for it often happens that it diſcovers the ſprings and means of right judgment, and produces a conviction of truths, new, intereſting and ſublime; he only that ſeeks and ſearches after truth ſincerely, can with any good reaſon hope to find it, and that faith which reſults from inquiry will be the moſt conſiſtent and ſtable, as well as the moſt ſatisfactory and influencing. The ſcriptures always repreſent it as the duty of every reaſonable being, even with reſpect to points of faith, which are the ſubject of divine revelation, the moſt ſublime in their nature, and the moſt important as to their end, an employment honourable in the ſight of God, and worthy the Chriſtian character.

There is a ſecret mental pleaſure in reſearches after truth, and eſtabliſhing our faith upon a ſolid foundation. This is a ſanction which God has annexed to his laws, ariſing from the very conſtitution of his nature, ſo much the more powerful, becauſe it is immediate and conſtant: this thirſt after knowledge, like other appetites increaſes by being gratified, but with this happy difference, that it increaſes by being indulged, and the pleaſure it leaves behind, is as grateful as the appetite was eager before.

The field of knowledge is large and ſpacions; there is room enough for every genius to exert itſelf upon objects ſuitable to its taſte; it helps us to ſpend our time agreeably, and ſweetens the cares of life with many pleaſing thoughts and reflections; it is the increaſe of knowledge that feeds the mind with new and agreeable repaſts, and furniſhes it with ſuch infinite variety of pleaſing views, that time never ſeems burdenſome or tedious; hence it was that Africanus ſaid, he was never leſs alone, than when alone.

The purſuit and acquiſition of truth is a natural and proper means of regulating our paſſions, and of avoiding thoſe diſcompoſures which are too apt to ruffle and perplex the ſoul; it tends to introduce a calm ſerenity of mind, which is itſelf one of the greateſt enjoyments

enjoyments of life, and gives a grateful reliſh and ſtability to all our other enjoyments.

A man of an extenſive knowledge, the natural reſult of inquiry, is beſt qualified to be uſeful and beneficent to his fellow creatures, to aſſiſt them under doubts and difficulties, to ſet them right with regard to points of real importance, and to inſpire them with ſentiments of equity, probity, generoſity, and love of their country.

Again, the pleaſures of converſation, which is one principal means for the acquiſition of knowledge, where it is conducted with freedom, friendſhip, eaſe, and improvement, is one of the greateſt ſocial amuſements of which human nature is capable; but which ever receive an additional ſatisfaction, as it partakes of all theſe advantages, which ſeldom fail to unite, where our own abilities qualify us for imbibing the mental ſatisfactions, and we are ſo happy as to converſe with thoſe whoſe diſpoſitions and talents form them for communicating their ſuperior ideas with clearneſs and perſpicuity.

It was a free and candid inquiry that at firſt introduced the reformation, and gave it ſuch remarkable ſucceſs, progreſs, and eſtabliſhment, freed us from many of the groſs errors and ridiculous ceremonies of the church of Rome; and hence the duty and advantages of free inquiry was always recommended by the firſt reformers as the baſis and ſupport of liberty and truth; judging very rightly, that ignorance can never be the mother of devotion in any religion, which is a reaſonable ſervice.

Error, ſuperſtition, and bigotry, can never be rooted out but by perſuading men to look upon themſelves as rational creatures, and to implant in their minds rational notions of religion. Religion there can be none without a moral difference of things, a moral difference of things there cannot be where there is no place for action, and action there can be none without liberty *.

* Dr. Clarke's remarks on the Phil. Inquiry concerning Human Liberty, p. 45.

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A free and impartial inquiry after truth, wherever it is to be found, is indeed a noble and moſt commendable diſpoſition; which every man ought himſelf to labour after, and to the utmoſt of his power encourage in all others. It is the great foundation of all uſeful knowledge, of all true virtue, and of all ſincere religion. But when a man in his ſearches into the nature of things find his inquiries leading him into ſuch notions as, if they ſhould prove true, would manifeſtly ſubvert the very eſſences of good and evil, the leaſt that a ſober minded man can in ſuch a caſe be ſuppoſed to owe to God, to virtue, to the dignity of a rational nature, is, that he ought to be in the higheſt degree fearful and ſuſpicious of himſelf, leſt he be led away by any prejudice, leſt he be deceived by any erroneous argument, leſt he ſuffer himſelf to be impoſed upon by any wrong inclination.

Our author concludes, that all ſincere lovers of truth, and liberty of free and impartial examination, are under the higheſt obligations, in reaſon and conſcience, always to make uſe of that freedom which we ſo greatly eſteem, and ſo juſtly boaſt of, in ſuch a manner only as may give no occaſion for ſuperſtitious men, and lovers of darkneſs, to endeavour to retrench that liberty of inquiring after truth, upon which all valuable knowledge, and all true religion, eſſentially depend.

Of the Diſadvantages of IGNORANCE *and* ERROR.

It is the opinion of a late philoſopher, and I think pretty generally received, that the mind of man is at firſt but a fair unwritten paper, till it has received ſome impreſſions from without, and improved upon them by its faculties of reflection; and conſequently that it is only wiſdom and inſtruction that fills it with fair and excellent characters; that write things upon it in their natural ſhape and order; that draw them to the

the life in their true colours and poſture; and deſcribe upon it the greateſt concerns that are or have been in the world; and, by their means, it becomes a delightful ſtorehouſe of the richeſt truths and moſt valuable knowledge.

Reaſon is the great perfection of human nature; but, like a diamond, it is naturally rough till education poliſhes it, and ſets it well; and as nothing is ſo perfective of our beings, ſo much worth our care and endeavours, as a wiſe and well-improved mind; ſo a defect of reaſon and underſtanding is looked upon as one of the greateſt blemiſhes of human nature. Nay, many had rather you impeach their morals than their wiſdom and underſtanding; and what is wiſdom and underſtanding, but a mind with true conceptions and lively ideas, ſtored and enriched with the knowledge of the beſt things, the opening it to the nobleſt truths? in letting it ſee and behold all things that God and nature hath ſet around it, and making uſeful improvement by proper reflections upon them?

Errors may be conſidered as more or leſs criminal, as they are in a higher or lower degree voluntary; and all error is voluntary where the cauſes of it are voluntary; as, in the firſt place, imperfect and ſuperficial inquiry, which is evidently unbecoming reaſonable creatures, who ought in all points of importance, in which their higheſt intereſt are concerned, to proceed with the utmoſt caution, or not to act with raſhneſs and preſumption; or, 2dly, Abſolute indifference and inattention, which directly oppoſes the original deſign of our peculiar and more noble faculties. But, 3dly, The cauſes of religious error may ſometimes be pride, prejudice, obſtinacy, or ſenſual paſſions, darkening and controuling the judgment, and often biaſſing the will to evil.

But this is to be underſtood with much reſtriction and limitation. I am ſenſible the cauſes of error are frequently involuntary. Many are under great diſadvantages for want of abilities, leiſure, or opportunity,

and other proper and neceſſary helps for the acquiſition of knowledge; and many, I am well ſatisfied, have made very conſiderable improvements under great diſcouragements and difficulties, which, where-ever it happens, redounds much to their reputation.

There are a great number of other perſons, who readily acknowledge a fitneſs and propriety in being acquainted with religious ſubjects; but perhaps they have more darling ſtudies that engage their thoughts, ingroſs their affections, and employ their time. Perhaps the ear has been captivated with muſic, or the mathematics better ſuited to their genius; or, they have made choice of ſome other learned profeſſions, upon which to employ their future ſtudies: and they have for this reaſon bid adieu to whatever is not in their nature ſubſervient to them.

I would by no means undervalue other ſciences, or ſpeak of them in diminutive terms; but then an inquiry after truth, and judging for ourſelves in matters of religion, may certainly throw in its claim, and ſupport its right to a part of our time, upon all the principles of ſolid reaſon, and the moſt ſubſtantial intereſt. For, as an ingenious author obſerves †, "If by the faculties we enjoy, we are ſo greatly advanced above the brute creation, our ideas, our purſuits, ought to bear proportion to thoſe ſuperior capacities with which we are diſtinguiſhed from them; and how induſtrious ſhould we be to improve every opportunity, is evident from their uncertainty. What trifles are apt to divert us, in compariſon of thoſe purſuits, ſo infinitely preferable. To employ our time therefore as mere humour or fancy ſuggeſt, without a regard to a rational improvement, is an imputation of folly, as it prefers an imaginary to a real pleaſure and advantage. In how many particulars may we be of ſervice to ourſelves? how much depends upon our endeavours? and therefore nothing leſs than the employment of our time, and our opportunities, in making attainments

† Employment of Time, p. 64.

thus

thus deſirable, can be conſiſtent with a ſenſe of its real benefit and laſting importance.

Some proper Rules to direct our INQUIRIES *after* TRUTH.

We have ſeen that there are truths of different natures, and evidences of different kinds and degrees; and it is no ſmall proof of the dignity of human nature, that, by the uſe of thoſe faculties with which we are endowed, we are enabled to compare propoſitions that differ, and inveſtigate many truths which do not appear obvious at firſt ſight.

This naturally ſuggeſts to us, that there are different methods to be purſued for the attainment of truth, according to their different natures, and the evidences of which they are capable *. And tho' the evidence of our ſenſes is the moſt natural, and in ſome caſes inconteſtible, yet it is alſo certain, that there are many propoſitions, of which there is a reaſonable and ſufficient moral evidence of their truth †.

Some of the rules and directions neceſſary to direct our inquiries, are as follow:

1. An humble and ſincere addreſs to the great Author of your being, for his favourable aſſiſtance and concurrence with you.

2 Propoſe to yourſelf as the only deſign of all your reaſonings and inquiries, to find out truth.

3. Examine all the circumſtances of the caſe propoſed, in the moſt careful and deliberate manner that you can. Raſh concluſions, without duly weighing the reaſons upon which they are founded, and what evidence there may be on the oppoſite ſide, is the reproach of intelligent nature.

4. Make ſuch inferences from them as your ſober

* With reſpect to the matter of Divine Revelation, as well as Human Teſtimony, conſult Dr. Watts's Logic.

† Ditton on the Reſurrection of Chriſt, from page 123 to 194 of Moral Evidence in general.

reaſon, without any art or management, does itſelf freely prompt you to make.

5. Never drop the inquiry till you have brought it to ſome determinate iſſue.

6. Let your perſuaſion be unprejudiced, free as poſſible from prepoſſeſſion, and an undue attachment to the ſentiments of others, tho' under the ſanction of public authority. Nothing ought to be the governing predominant principle to direct our inquiries, but the evidence of its being the mind and will of God: and in judging of points of faith, that depends on the authority of the inſpired books, the expreſſions taken from the ſcriptures ſhould be made the meaſure of interpreting ſuch as are not taken from the ſcripture, and not the contrary.

7. Though you are not to pay an implicit regard to the opinions and ſentiments of others, we may in many caſes lawfully and prudently conſult men of wiſdom and years, obſervation and experience, in order to aſſiſt our inquiries, both in points of a civil, moral, and religious nature *.

There are, ſays Dr. Watts †, five eminent means or methods, whereby the mind is improved in the knowledge of things; and theſe are, *obſervation*, *reading*, *inſtruction by lectures*, *converſation* and *meditation*.

Obſervation is the notice that we take of all occurrences and concerns of human life, whether they are ſenſible or intellectual, whether relating to perſons or things, to ourſelves, or others: all things which we ſee, which we hear, or feel, which we perceive by ſenſe or conſciouſneſs, or which we know in a direct manner, with ſcarce any exerciſe of our reaſoning powers, may be included under the general name of obſervation.

* Dr. Watts's Logic, p. 231, & ſeq. See likewiſe Grove's Moral Philoſ. vol. II. p. 59 & ſeq.

† Improvement of the Mind, p. 30. illuſtrated by a variety of Rules and Directions, from p. 60 to 211.

Reading

Reading is another and very conſiderable means or method of knowledge, whereby we acquaint ourſelves with what other men have written or publiſhed to the world in their writings; by this means we partake of the ſentiments, reaſonings, and improvements of all the learned world, in the moſt remote nations, and in former ages, almoſt from the beginning of mankind.

Converſation is another method of improving our minds; wherein, by mutual diſcourſe and inquiry, we learn the ſentiments of others, as well as communicate our ſentiments to them in the ſame manner, ſometimes between a teacher and learner; but the profit is frequently mutual. Under this head we may alſo rank diſputes of various kinds.

Public or *private lectures*, are ſuch verbal inſtructions as are given by a teacher, while the learner attends in ſilence. Thus religion is learnt from the pulpit-philoſophy, or theology from the profeſſor's chair, mathematics by a teacher, &c.

Meditation, or ſtudy, includes all thoſe exerciſes of the mind, whereby we render all the former methods uſeful for our increaſe in true knowledge and wiſdom. It is by meditation we come to confirm our memories of things that paſs through our thoughts in the occurrences of life, in our own experiences, and in the obſervations we make. It is by meditation that we draw various inferences, and eſtabliſh in our minds general principles of knowledge. It is by meditation that we compare the various ideas which we derive from our ſenſes, or from the operations of our ſouls, and join them in propoſitions. It is by meditation, that we fix in our memory whatſoever we learn, and form our own judgment of the truth or falſhood, the ſtrength or weakneſs of what others write. It is meditation or ſtudy that draws out long chains of argument, and ſearches and finds deep and difficult truths, which before lay concealed in darkneſs.

It would be a needleſs thing to prove, that our own

ſolitary meditations, together with the few obſervations that the moſt part of mankind are capable of making, are not ſufficient of themſelves to lead us to the attainment of any conſiderable proportion of knowledge, at leaſt in an age ſo much improved as ours is, without the aſſiſtance of converſation and reading, and other proper inſtructions that are to be attained in our days; yet each of theſe five methods have their peculiar advantages, whereby they aſſiſt each other, and contribute to increaſe our knowledge.

But it is time to apply the *preceding remarks* to the *ſubſequent hiſtory*.

As Proteſtants and Diſſenters from the church of Rome, we are obliged to admit the right of private judgment, in oppoſition to our receiving any thing for true on the credit of the Pope as infallible judge, or (as others of that communion expreſs themſelves) on the judgment of the Pope, in conjunction with a council of biſhops; and if this is not admitted, how can we juſtify the conduct of our principal reformers? Did they diſſent without inquiring? and, if they made free to examine for themſelves, did they not, by neceſſary conſequence, aſſert the right of every man to do the ſame for himſelf? And if this be done with care and ſincere veneration for truth, if we honeſtly endeavour to avoid every error, we may be aſſured, whatever may be the reſult of our inquiry, we ſhall not at the bar of God ſtand chargeable with voluntary ignorance and criminal miſtake.

One principal part of our inquiry, as Proteſtants, is, how we ſhall ſtrip Popery of its ſtrongeſt bulwark, the pretended infallibility and authority of the church, explode their pretended miracles, and vindicate the principles of Proteſtantiſm againſt all their attempts to blacken and vilify it; vindicate the authority of Scripture as the rule of a Chriſtian's faith and worſhip, in oppoſition to tradition; point out their various inventions and ſuperſtitions in worſhip and diſcipline; ſhew the novelty and abſurdity of many of their ceremonies;

monies; diſplay the abſurdity of their pretended doctrines of tranſubſtantiation, the groſs preſumption of abſolution, and the immoral tendency of indulgences; and, above all, convince them of the repugnancy of perſecution to the ſpirit and practice of genuine Chriſtianity: and, to do this the more effectually, acquaint yourſelf with the moſt authentic proofs of their groſs corruptions; the commencement and confirmation of them from the beſt hiſtorians of their church; the decrees of councils and ſynods; and be able to prove the hypotheſes you advance by unqueſtionable authorities: for they will roundly deny, or artfully evade, whatever they are not qualified to vindicate; and deſpiſe the proofs brought by Proteſtants, however well ſupported. 'Tis, methinks, a laudable acquiſition to be able well to defend and ſupport the Chriſtian religion againſt the ſubtilty and artifice of thoſe enemies of our holy religion; and though I cannot point out in what part of England it is at preſent prevailing, Ireland abounds with them; and I am well informed, that in ſome counties of England their numbers are very conſiderable, which ſhould animate Proteſtants to be upon their guard againſt the deluſive ſpirit of popery.

A late worthy prelate obſerves *, "That popiſh ſuperſtition is a more active principle, with regard to conqueſt, than rational proteſtantiſm. The firſt piques itſelf on deſtroying and extirpating the enemies of God; the latter, regarding none as the enemies of God on account of error, aims only at a rational defence. While proteſtantiſm therefore retains its proper influence in the minds of men, it may be a match for popiſh ſuperſtition; what it wants in fury, it makes up in ſteadineſs. This truth our forefathers have twice experienced in our own country." However, he concludes, upon the whole of ſuch arguments, that proteſtantiſm calmly preſents herſelf to the reaſon, while popery ſeizes the paſſions of men; and hence modern

* Eſtimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times.

popery,

popery, ſet againſt modern proteſtantiſm, is in danger of overwhelming it.

With regard to our own country, the ſame author remarks, that the principles of proteſtantiſm have loſt their influence or ruling-power; inſomuch that it is no injuſtice to the higher ranks of this kingdom to ſay, that the main ſecurity of the church ariſeth from its alliance with the ſtate. There is now among the Great ſuch a general indifference and ſupineneſs in, not to ſay contempt of, every thing that regards religion only, as may well alarm thoſe few who look forward to poſterity. How different a ſtate of religion is this from that which prevailed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when, as Bolingbroke obſerves, the reformation was eſtabliſhed, not only in the outward form, but in the hearts of men!——How different from that which prevailed at the grand period of the abdication of James II. when proteſtant principles took the lead even of the ſpirit of civil liberty, and effected the moſt glorious revolution that hiſtory hath yet recorded; a revolution that might juſtly be ſtiled religious rather than political. That great religious ſpirit, which at thoſe illuſtrious periods ſhone ſo bright, is now, as it were, quenched in darkneſs!

Popery advances with dreadful ſtrides in America, while proteſtantiſm lies as it were indolent and inactive; and he aſſerts, that on the continent of Europe, the Proteſtant crowns are divided one againſt each other. The popiſh crowns unite in open and ſecret confederacy. The Empreſs Queen has thrown off the maſk, and baſely deſerted thoſe who had long and often ſaved her from deſtruction. France is purſuing its old game, and following its eſtabliſhed plan of power, and is as tenacious of the popiſh doctrines and practices, as is ſubſervient to it; and, if Voltaire may be credited, theiſm is generally prevailing *. Their ſentiments are diſperſed thro' all religions, both abroad and at home, looking on the

* Voltaire's Diſcourſe on Theiſm.

law

law of nature only as religion, and regarding the external form of religion, however it may be agreeable to the preſcribed rules of the Chriſtian revelation, as inſignificant. The manifeſt inference is this, as it appears that the genius of popery is active, inſinuating, furious, permanent, and unalterable; the genius of proteſtaniſm, calm, rational, indolent, fluctuating; at the ſame time the enemies of Chriſtianity are artful, inſinuating, and vigilant, to oppoſe its genuine doctrines; Proteſtants ought to be more watchful in the preſervation of the invaluable privileges they enjoy, and be active in the ſupport of them, by endeavouring to ſupport thoſe whom, next to God, are its bulwark and defence. It was obſerved by the late biſhop of London, in his ſermon on the laſt rebellion, that we are apt to boaſt of the purity of our religion, and our reformation from the errors and corruptions of the church of Rome, and to flatter ourſelves we are the peculiar people of God, and ſet up by providence to be the bulwark of the Proteſtant religion. "But remember ſtill, ſays his lordſhip, that we are choſen to profeſs the truth of God's holy goſpel, and to bear our teſtimony againſt the corruptions which have prevailed over great part of the Chriſtian world. Let us therefore ſet a true value upon the bleſſings that are beſtowed on us, and walk worthy of the light of the goſpel, which has ſhone upon us, that our conduct and behaviour may bear teſtimony to the truth we profeſs."

Another great point of our inquiry ſhould be, the defence of the Chriſtian religion againſt the bold attacks or ſecret inſinuations of DEISTS; and it is now pretty well known, that their chief ſtrength lies not ſo much in oppoſing the ſcripture-doctrine, as thoſe miſconſtructions which ſome profeſſors of chriſtianity themſelves have put upon it. And in this point it behoves us to call off unbelievers from their falſe ideas, and give them to underſtand the true ſtate of the controverſy between them and us, which is too often overlooked

looked by the profeſſed writers on that ſide of the queſtion. And in proof of this I need only refer my reader to *Chriſtianity as old as the creation*, and to a later book, called *Chriſtianity not founded on argument.*

It is a truth that I believe few will deny, however to be regretted (in a land of ſo much learning, and where the Chriſtian religion has been ſo well defended) that infidelity or deiſm has become faſhionable; and this is by no means owing to the cogency of their arguments, but rather to the pains they take in making proſelytes; for which they truſt not to books alone for propagation of their opinions, but that in converſation they will (and actually do) endeavour to ſeduce others; the ſucceſs of which if poſſible ſhould be prevented by the abilities and aſſiduity of profeſſed Chriſtians; and whilſt they cavil at revealed religion, it is our buſineſs to put them to the proofs, that mere natural religion contain more eſſential, fixed, and permanent principles, and as ſuch a wiſer and better ſyſtem; call upon them likewiſe to ſhew that they have more ſubſtantial motives to virtue, ſupported upon better evidence. Many of them at leaſt heſitate about a future ſtate; others diſcard the notion of it, and many of thoſe who profeſs to believe in a future ſtate, are in great perplexity and uncertainty about the nature and duration of the happineſs or miſery which will be aſſigned to the virtuous or the wicked. We may eaſily demonſtate to them, that the evidences of the ſanctions of the Chriſtian religion are not ſo precarious and uncertain; that we have a more ſure word of prophecy, whereunto we ſhall do well if we take heed, as unto a light ſhining in a dark place, 2 Pet. i. 19.

I have occaſionally mentioned many of our eminent prelates and divines, whoſe defences of chriſtianity have done honour to their names, their country and their religion, and ſufficient, a Chriſtian would readily imagine, to ſatisfy every unprejudiced opponent. But if this is not ſo, ſomething more becomes our duty; we

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are not to give up with indifferency the great articles of our holy religion; but, as far as in us lies, ſhew ourſelves always ready, and always able to confute their ſtrongeſt arguments, and explode their ludicrous cavils.

But it would be no difficult matter, if we would give ourſelves time to deliberate on the natural conſequences of ſome of their tenets, ſuch as the doctrine of materiality, that God is nature, nature God, &c. to ſhew that deiſm, of which this is one of their favorite ſentiments, has a direct tendency to ſap the foundation of our happy conſtitution, both in church and ſtate, and directly repugnant to the eſtabliſhed and tolerated religion, and municipal laws of this kingdom, and particularly in the teeth of an act of parliament, now in force againſt prophaneneſs and immorality, made not only ſince the reformation, but alſo ſince the revolution, and toleration of liberty of conſcience, by confeſſedly a number of as wiſe men, and great abilities as ever graced a ſenate. See 9 & 10 of K. William III. Seſſ. 20. cap. 32 *.

But beſides thoſe peculiar obligations to acquaint ourſelves with the principal arguments, in defence of the Chriſtian religion, againſt the objections of modern deiſts, and on every proper occaſion to vindicate the excellency and authority of the Chriſtian revelation, the ſcripture not only requires that every man be fully perſuaded in own mind, but that he is able to give an account of the faith that is in him, with meekneſs and fear, and reaſon coincide with it, as it is not only the juſt foundation of our ſtability in the Chriſtian principles, but a conſcious evidence of our having embraced them upon ſuitable authority.

Thoſe who make profeſſion of the religion eſtabliſhed by law, ought at all times, not only to be acquainted with the principles of that religion, but at the ſame time

* P. S. We ſhall have occaſion to treat of the different ſentiments of deiſts in another place.

be

be able to offer ſomething pertinent, and convincing that they have not undertaken that profeſſion in complaiſance to eſtabliſhed articles only; but from their appearing to be founded on arguments more ſubſtantial and influencing, ſuch as to them appear agreeable to the ſacred ſcriptures, which is allowed the ſtandard of truth to all proteſtants, according to the ſixth article of the church of England, and many of the canons of that church. This may be applied to the principal doctrines contained in their articles, diſcipline, mode of worſhip, ceremonies, &c.

To ſuch as profeſs to differ from the eſtabliſhed religion, it behoves them in a particular manner to ſhew the reaſonableneſs of their ſeparation, that no falſe bias, no contempt of the authority of the legiſlator, a love of ſingularity or novelty, but a thorough conviction that the tenets they profeſs are more agreeable to Scripture and reaſon; that the worſhip they engage in is more ſimple, ſpiritual, and edifying; that the diſcipline practiſed in thoſe churches is more conducive to the purity of faith, the regularity of conduct, and the peace and good order of ſociety. If the tenets or principles of that ſociety of which they profeſs themſelves members, though few in number, are the peculiar characteriſtics of that ſociety or denomination, it becomes them more eſpecially to be able to ſhew their ſignificance and importance, as having their immediate foundation in the ſacred writings, and therein declared to be of indiſpenſible obligation *.

I ſhall leave the reader to make the moſt candid application of theſe particulars, according to his own abilities and circumſtances, and ſhall conclude with an *Addreſs* to the *Britiſh Youth* of both Sexes.

You are favoured with great advantages andopportunities for the attainment of Chriſtian knowledge, and enjoy the glorious privilege of religious liberty. Beware of a trifling indifference with reſpect to reli-

* See Remarks on Fundamentals.

gion;

gion; and as your minds are ſuſceptible of many impreſſions, let them be ſtored with religious truths, founded on juſt and rational principles; trace the great doctrines of the Chriſtian inſtitution in their genuine nature, tendency, and effects, as contained in the New Teſtament, and with that candour and impartiality as becomes a diligent inquirer in matters of the moſt momentous concern; and when the evidences of the truth of evangelical doctrines are maturely weighed, I perſuade myſelf they will appear worthy of all acceptation, and the preceptive part be approved as the moſt perfect ſcheme of religion that was ever afforded to mankind, and enforced by the moſt excellent motives. In fine, religion will appear your higheſt wiſdom, your trueſt, and moſt laſting intereſt; which, that I may recommend in the moſt elegant and perſuaſive manner, I ſhall cloſe with the words of Dr. Clarke *.

" If wiſdom conſiſts in ſtudying thoſe things which are of the greateſt uſe and neceſſity for us to know; if it be wiſe for us to employ our thoughts about things in their own nature the moſt excellent, and in their relation to us of the utmoſt importance; if it be wiſe to purſue the nobleſt ends, and in the purſuit thereof to uſe the beſt and propereſt means; if it be wiſe to conſult our own real happineſs, and to be more concerned for the improvement of our minds in practical knowledge, than for amuſing them with vain and empty ſpeculations; if eternity be of more importance than time, and a never-ceaſing duration than a tranſitory moment; if the favour of God be infinitely more valuable than the friendſhip of the world; if joy and ſatisfaction of mind be truly more deſirable than doubt and anxiety; if it be wiſer to promote the happineſs of ſociety, by encouraging peace, charity and univerſal good-will; then that men ſhould make each other miſerable without cauſe, and without end, if wiſdom

* Dr. Clarke's Sermons, vol. II. ſer. vii. p. 146.

conſiſts

consists in knowing and distinguishing, in chusing and adhering to whatever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, pure, and of good report; things that make our present enjoyments easy, and the remembrance of what is past comfortable, and the hopes and expectations of what is to come secure; then is religion man's truest wisdom, for where are these things to be found, but in the practice of virtue and true religion?"

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THE HISTORY OF RELIGION.

CHAP. I.

Of the promulgation of Chriſtianity. The eſtabliſhment of churches, particularly of the church of Rome: containing the moſt remarkable tranſactions of that church, and the variations in the conſtitution, doctrine, worſhip, and ceremonies thereof, for ſeventeen centuries.

CENTURY THE FIRST.

WHEN man was ſunk into ignorance and ſuperſtition, and there were ſcarce any remains of the uncorrupt religion of nature; when the powers of reaſon and philoſophy were either not employed, or their efforts proved ineffectual to recover mankind to the knowledge of the one true God, the maker and governor of the univerſe, and to give them juſt and worthy notions of his perfections and providence, and the worſhip due to him. To reſtore religion to its native purity and luſtre; to ſettle morality and the ſocial virtues upon their true and native foundation, and to give divine laws a proper ſanction and influence, the ſupreme God and Father of all,

who, at ſundry times, and by divers methods of divine revelation, ſpake unto the fathers by the mouth of his holy prophets, did, in the fulneſs of time, and in the riches of his grace, ſpeak unto us with peculiar authority and excellence by his own Son.

This great event was predicted by many ancient prophecies, and uſhered in with ſeraphic joy; an angel proclaiming his advent with repeated *Hallelujah! Glory to God in the higheſt! on earth, peace and good will towards men!*

This event came to paſs in the reign of the emperor Auguſtus, which, with the conſequent fall of heatheniſh idolatry, and the converſion of the Gentiles by the preaching of the goſpel, was as amazing a revolution as ever happened in the world, and is with propriety ſtiled the Chriſtian Æra or Epocha.

When the kingdom of the Meſſiah approached, John the Baptiſt was appointed and ſent by God, to preach and exhort his hearers to repentance, and to forſake every courſe of vice, and thereby to prepare their minds for the reception of that diſpenſation, and the fit ſubjects of that kingdom, in which eternal and immutable righteouſneſs ſhould be chiefly and ultimately recommended.

And when, in divine wiſdom, our Lord was baptiſed and entered on his public miniſtry, we find his doctrines ſuitable to the dignity of his character and miſſion, and to the excellent and important end of his coming; of which it may be neceſſary to give a general account.

Jeſus Chriſt, the great author and founder of the Chriſtian faith, not only explained and inculcated the great principles and duties of natural religion, ſpiritual adoration, purity and integrity of heart, unblameableneſs of life and converſation: The eſſence of all which he declares to be love intenſely towards God, and extenſively towards men, included in living ſoberly, righteouſly, and godlily

Natural religion.

godlily.* But he lays open, by his public miniſtry, his divine character and miſſion, confirmed by inconteſtable proofs, in order to awaken the attention of mankind, and engage them upon a rational conviction to become his diſciples and followers *; in order to which he taught and inſtructed his audience, what were the great principles and duties of his goſpel — repentance towards God, and faith in him, as the Son of God, and the only mediator between God and man — ſtrictly enjoining an unfeigned, impartial, uniform, and perſevering obedience, an entire ſubmiſſion to his laws, as neceſſary to conſtitute us chriſtians, the ſubjects of his kingdom, and entitle us to the privileges and rewards promiſed in his goſpel. This is called, the doctrine according to godlineſs §.

Goſpel doctrines.

Jeſus Chriſt having thus begun to eſtabliſh his kingdom, and preſcribe rules to his ſubjects and votaries, in order the better to anſwer the important purpoſes of religion, recommended, and enjoined, their uniting together in communities for public worſhip, and the increaſe of their knowledge and virtue. He likewiſe inſtituted two rites, commonly called Poſitive inſtitutions, to be obſerved, viz. *baptiſm* and the *Lord's ſupper*; the former as a rite whereby they were publicly to profeſs their diſcipleſhip to him ‖; the latter, as a memorial of his death †, which he was ſhortly to ſubmit to, in obedience to the divine will, for their ſalvation ‡; and that he ſhould riſe again as the pledge and aſſurance of the reſurrection

Poſitive Inſtitutions.

* Rational Catechiſm, p. 59.

§ 1 Tim. vi. 3. See alſo Tillotſon's Sermons, Locke's Reaſonableneſs of Chriſtianity, Lawrences's Chriſtian Morals and Chriſtian Prudence, Dr. Chandler's and Dr. Foſter's Defence of the Chriſtian Revelation.

‖ See Foſter's Truth of the Chriſtian Revelation, p. 310. Hoadly's Plain Account. Whitby's Paraphraſe on Rom. vi. 4.

† Lawrence's Chriſtian Morals, vol. 1. Dr. Clark's Eſſay on Baptiſm.

‡ Grotius' Annot. on Matt. xix. 14.

of all men, and of the infallible accompliſhment of the promiſes of reward, or denunciation of future puniſhment, which were the ſanction of his goſpel ‖.

Church members.

It was Chriſt's appointment, that people ſhould firſt be proſelyted and gained to profeſs themſelves his diſciples; then to be admitted to outward communion; and then were further taught and required, to obſerve all things whatſoever he had commanded, theſe conſtituted the members of Chriſt's church. And without a ſupplement to the New Teſtament, proof will be wanting, that Jeſus Chriſt hath veſted any with authority to alter or make void his original inſtitution*.

Nature and deſign of the Chriſtian Church.

And if we examine the writings of the New Teſtament, we ſhall find that one end and deſign of our Lord, in laying a foundation for thoſe friendly ſocieties, was, that his diſciples being united, and living under the power and influence of his goſpel, might be actuated by a friendly and brotherly affection, to encourage, ſupport and comfort each other under every difficulty, and, by a good example, to provoke one another to love and to good works.

Another valuable purpoſe intended to be anſwered hereby, was, that thoſe ſocieties might be lights to the world, become public examples of virtue, and thereby recommend the goſpel to more general acceptance. Chriſtian ſocieties are intended to be like a city ſet on a hill, that cannot be hid; that is, they are intended to be a collection of perſons, who for their plainneſs and ſimplicity, their juſtice, honeſty, and integrity; their modeſty, temperance, and ſobriety; their peaceable, and quiet, their loving, friendly, and benevolent behaviour, may be an evidence of the bleſſed effects of the goſpel of Chriſt.

‖ Fiſher's Chriſtianiſmus Redivivus.

* The Rev. Mr. Samuel Bolde's Thoughts on Church Authority, p. 96.

This

This is indiſputably evident from the general tenour of our Lord's diſcourſe in his excellent ſermon on the mount; and from thence we find what our Lord means, by believing in him; not a bare aſſent to the truth of this propoſition, that Jeſus is the Chriſt; but he means by it, the attending to that meſſage which he was ſent to deliver to the world, and the conforming our minds and lives according to it: and having thus ſhewn what temper and behaviour his diſciples and followers ought to put on, he repreſents to them the mighty conſequence of ſuch temper and actions. Mat. vii. 21, 22, 23. *Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord! Lord! ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father, which is in Heaven.* And our Lord, ver. 24, 25, ſays, *Therefore, whoever heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him to a wiſe man who built his houſe upon a rock*; hereby intimating, that it was the Chriſtians beſt ſecurity in times of trial, not merely profeſſing Chriſt, or giving him the higheſt appellation, nor even propheſying in his name, would recommend them to the rewards promiſed in his goſpel, without a temper of mind and courſe of life conformable thereto.

True Nature of faith in Chriſt.

To believe in, and ſubmit to be governed by the laws of Chriſt, are what denominate a Chriſtian, and contract the relation betwixt him and them, and which conſtitute him the head, and they the members of his body; ſo that Chriſtians, as Chriſtians, have no other head, that is, they have no other authoritative power or governor over them, but their one common head or governor, viz. Chriſt Jeſus, our Lord; they have no other law, conſidered as chriſtians, but the laws of Chriſt to direct their behaviour by.

From hence we ſee what is to be underſtood by the term univerſal or catholic church, viz. that it includes all thoſe who, throughout the face of the whole earth, profeſs faith in

Catholic Church defined.

Christ, and acknowledge him to be head and lord of all, and submit to him as such ‡. Thus Irenæus speaks of the church dispersed throughout the whole world.

The church of Christ, or the kingdom of Christ, is the number of men, whether small or great, whether dispersed or united, who truly and sincerely are subjects to Jesus Christ alone, as their lawgiver and judge, in matters relating to the favour of God, and their eternal salvation †. From hence it is plain wherein the unity of faith, at this time, did consist. Not in an uniformity of rites and customs, in which the eastern and western churches greatly differed; but in an harmonious assent to the essential and fundamental doctrines ‖.

Christ the Christian's Patern.

Christ is therefore represented as the Christian's patern, an excellent and worthy example of every good word and work. Christ preached his own life, and lived his own doctrine, and thereby he was at once a standing monument of the practicableness of virtue, and of the present peace and happiness that flows from it; in him we have an example of a quiet and peaceable spirit of modesty and uprightness, of benevolence and charity towards men, and of devotion and piety towards God, in which, so far as his disciples are careful to imitate their lord and master, they would recommend his doctrines to the world.

Christ did not lay a foundation by his doctrine, or encourage by his example, that, among his Disciples and followers, some should be singled out from their brethren, to be possessed of great revenues, live in stately palaces, wallow in luxury and ease, and lord it over those by whose labours they are maintained; placed on thrones, or garnished stalls, and seats of honour, assuming and exercising dominion over their

‡ King's Primitive Church. p. 2.
† Hoadly's Nature of the Kingdom of Christ, p. 7.
‖ See King's Primitive Church, p. 158.

brethren,

brethren; and that others ſhould be ſubject to them, bow down to them, and call them Rabbi! Rabbi! as though they were inveſted with divine authority and infallibility, that, on the contrary, he has ſtrictly forbid it, Matt. xx. 25, 26, 27, 28. *But Jeſus called them* (viz. his diſciples) *unto him, and ſaid, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exerciſe dominion over them, and they that are great exerciſe authority upon them; but it ſhall not be ſo among you; but whoſoever will be great among you, let him be your miniſter, and whoſoever will be chief among you, let him be your ſervant; even as the Son of Man came not to be miniſtered unto, but to miniſter*, chap. xxiii. 8, 9, 10. *But be not ye called Rabbi; for one is your maſter, even Chriſt; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father, upon the earth; for one is your father, which is in heaven: neither be ye called maſter, for one is your maſter, even Chriſt* *.

As Chriſt propoſed his own example for his followers to imitate; ſo, in a particular and ſpecial manner, he recommended humility, and gave them an example of his own great condeſcenſion, in performing the meaneſt office to his diſciples, in the inſtance of waſhing their feet, which is related at large, and with the plaineſt injunction to his diſciples, to go and do likewiſe, John xiii. 4, 5, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16.

But as our Lord foreſaw, from the moſt probable circumſtances, that there would be ſome difference of ſentiment, ſome whoſe principles and conduct would contradict the genuine ſimplicity of his goſpel, he left ſome farther directions, by which his diſciples ſhould regulate their conduct towards each other, under thoſe circumſtances; and in the ſtrongeſt terms recommends love to one another, as the criterion, or characteriſtic of their diſcipleſhip to him, John xiii. 35. and forbids raſh judging and cen-

Perſecution unchriſtian.

* See Dr. John Gale's Sermons (vol. 1.) on this Text, Mr. Samuel Bolde's Thoughts on Church Power, and Hoadly's Anſwer to the Committee.

ſuring one another, as inconſiſtent with that character, and enjoins them to *be at peace among themſelves*, as they had profeſſed to acknowledge but one maſter, and to be united by that profeſſion as brethren, Matt. vii. 1. Mark ix. 5. and Matt. xxiii. 8.

And as if our Lord had particularly intended to guard all thoſe who called themſelves his diſciples, againſt perſecution for conſcience ſake, and of deſtroying mens lives under the pretence of promoting the cauſe and intereſt of his goſpel, he ſtrictly commands that the tares and the wheat grow together till the harveſt.

Jeſus Chriſt hath likewiſe given Chriſtian ſocieties ſome cautions and directions, with reſpect to their devotions, Matt. vi. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *But when ye pray, uſe not vain repetitions, as the heathens do, for they think they ſhall be heard for their much ſpeaking; be not ye therefore like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye aſk him. After this manner therefore, pray ye. Our Father which art in heaven*, &c. Whether we conſider this as a form of prayer, or only as a guide and a direction to Chriſtian ſocieties, with reſpect to the object and the ſubject of their prayers; the diſpoſitions and qualifications of the perſons praying, and the grounds of their acceptance with God, it comes to the ſame, becauſe the ſame uſeful inſtructions are held forth in either caſe. Here Chriſtians are taught to direct their prayers to God the Father, whoſe paternal kindneſs diſpoſes him to do more abundantly for his dutiful children than they can aſk or think.—Another encouraging motive to prayer, which our Lord gave to his diſciples, was, that they ſhould aſk the Father in his name, John xvi. 23. *Whatſoever ye ſhall aſk the Father in my name, he will give it you*; hereby aſſuring them that God the Father had dignified his own Son, by the acceptance of him, as the alone mediator between himſelf and his creatures.

Preſcribed prayer.

Chriſt the alone mediator.

Another

Another encouraging motive which our Lord gave to his profeſſed diſciples, was the promiſe of divine aſſiſtance, in aid to the weakneſs of human nature, to co-operate with their ſincere endeavours after virtue. *I will pray the Father*, ſays our Lord, *and he will give you another comforter, which will abide with you for ever*, John xiv. 15, 16, 17*.

Thus we ſee the foundation of the Chriſtian church, as it was laid by Jeſus Chriſt himſelf: what were the qualifications requiſite to conſtitute the members of it; what were the ends to be propoſed and anſwered by ſuch ſocieties; and what were the benefits that would ariſe from thence; namely, that his voluntary and faithful perſevering followers, ſhould enter into the kingdom of heaven, and enjoy eternal life.

And that the goſpel might be preached to all nations, and that the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, might be brought under its influence, and conſequently might ſhare in its benefits, Chriſt choſe twelve men, (of which one proved a traitor to him, and to fill up whoſe place Matthias was choſen) to be with him in his preaching and miniſtry among the Jews, to be witneſſes of what he both taught and did, and whom he intended to appoint and qualify to preach the ſame goſpel to the reſt of mankind. And accordingly Chriſt, after he was put to death by the Jews and Romans, roſe again from the dead, on purpoſe that he might ſtrictly charge and command, and that he might excite and enable theſe his apoſtles to preach his goſpel as aforeſaid, and thereby purſue the great end and purpoſe of his coming. Luke xxiv. 26, 27, 28, 29. *Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Chriſt to ſuffer, and ariſe from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached in his name among*

The apoſtles commiſſioned.

* See Doctor Foſter, of the Influences and Fruits of the Spirit, vol. II. p. 110.

Lawrence's Chriſtian Morals, &c. vol. I. p. 184, 185.

Biſhop of Glouceſter's Three Diſcourſes on the Influences of the Spirit.

all

all nations, beginning at Jeruſalem. And ye are witneſſes of theſe things; and behold I ſend the promiſe of my Father unto you, but tarry ye in the city of Jeruſalem until ye ſhall be endued with power from on high. This promiſe of the Father, or the enduing them with power from on high, was made good to them at the feaſt of Pentecoſt. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19. *And Jeſus came and ſpake unto them, ſaying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.* To the perſons before-mentioned were afterwards added two more, viz. Paul and Barnabas, that in the exerciſe of their miniſtry, up and down the world, theſe fourteen apoſtles might offer to all, without diſtinction, the goſpel of Chriſt, and by their preaching and example encourage others voluntarily to become Chriſtians.

The publication of the goſpel being ordained as the means to call, and engage, and prevail with ſinners, in conſideration of the proofs thereby given, and the benefits therein offered, to believe in Chriſt as the promiſed Meſſiah, and to take him with their whole hearts to be their ſole teacher, lawgiver, and judge; to make open profeſſion of that faith and ſelf-dedication to him, and to love unfeignedly all his diſciples, as they would be the members of Chriſt's church or kingdom:* the banner of a Chriſtian is not the picture of a croſs hung upon a pole, or made upon his forehead; but it is a virtuous and unblameable converſation, or a mind and life conformed to the goſpel of Chriſt.

And accordingly we find that, purſuant to the commiſſion which our Lord gave to the apoſtles, *ſaying, As my Father hath ſent me, ſo ſend I you,* (which, by the way, ſhews the extent of the apoſtolic commiſſion) they went forth to different parts to eſtabliſh the kingdom of the Meſſiah, and to preach the goſpel to all, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free. Thus St. Andrew principally preached the goſpel

* Rev. Mr. Samuel Bolde on Church Power, p. 51.

in

in Scythia, St. Bartholomew in India, St. Matthew in Parthia, St. John in the Leſſer Aſia, &c §.

It may here be proper, though it may ſeem a digreſſion, to take notice of the peculiar as well as ſupernatural qualifications of the apoſtles to their ſpecial office and dignity; for beſides their extraordinary call and commiſſion, of which we have already taken notice, theſe were more eſpecially ſtiled the ambaſſadors of God to men, for which they were qualified by the communication of ſpiritual gifts, and of miraculous powers. They had, indeed, ſeen our Lord, and were ſufficiently qualified to be witneſſes of the truth and reality of his reſurrection from the dead, upon which grand fact they were to found the evidence of the Chriſtian doctrines, which they had, in great meaſure, learnt from him, as eye and ear witneſſes of his doctrines, life, and miracles. But beſides this, they had the effuſion of the ſpirit, whereby they were qualified to preach the goſpel in the different parts of the world, and to work miracles in atteſtation of their miſſion and doctrine. Theſe ſpiritual gifts and powers are mentioned, 1 Cor. xii. 8, 9, 10, 28, 29, 30. To them was committed, by the ſame ſpirit, the word of wiſdom—the word of knowledge—the gift of diſcerning ſpirits *—and in conſequence of this, of binding or looſing, remitting or retaining the ſins of men † — They had alſo the gift of prophecy — the

§ King's Primitive Church.

* Some judicious writers underſtand this to relate to their diſcernment and prudence in the recommendation and appointment of proper perſons to the miniſtry.

† The aſſuming power of the Romiſh church, or the pope, is in no inſtance more remarkable, than in claiming the power of abſolution and indulgences, founded on thoſe words, John xx. 23. *Whoſe ſins ſoever ye remit, they are remitted, and whoſe ſins ſo ever ye retain, they are retained*, addreſſed to the apoſtles; but evidently relate to, and muſt be underſtood of, ſuch conditions whereon God hath promiſed pardon. And the form of abſolution, made uſe of in the three firſt centuries, was this—*Almighty God, be merciful unto thee, and forgive thee thy ſins(a)*. And in the Greek church, this prayer

(a) *Ordo Romanus in the pontifical of the Latin church, p.* 567.

—the gift of tongues—the gift of interpretation of tongues, and the gift of fortitude is generally reckoned with the former. By these, and the like supernatural gifts, with which they were indued, by the effusion of the spirit, on the day of Pentecost, or communicated to them sometimes instantaneously, they were enabled to give such proofs of their mission and doctrine, as might tend to the furtherance of the gospel.

Thus St. Peter and St. John cured a man who was forty years old, and had been lame from his birth, Acts ii. 4. And St. Peter raised Dorcas from the dead, and St. Paul raised Eutychus, which power did not extend to other apostles.

And we no where find, that this power was inherent in, or capable of being wantonly exerted by them; but absolutely dependent on the power and pleasure of the Supreme Giver.

prayer of Damascen is still cited: "O Lord Jesus Christ, our God, who hath power to forgive sins, in thy goodness and loving-kindness pass by all offences of thy servants; for thou art the God of mercies, and able to forgive sins."—In this sense, the office of the priest is to declare and pronounce to his people, being penitent, the absolution and remission of their sins; and, surely, what they are to declare and pronounce, must actually be done before they can really declare and pronounce it to be done.

Here it is objected, that, if this be the import of the words, and they were spoken to the apostles in that sense, that they cannot, in the same sense, belong to any of their successors, Why do we, in our ordination, retain this form of words? "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose soever sins ye remit, thay are remitted, and whose sins soever ye retain, they are retained."—No more is intended by it than this: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost for the office of a bishop, or receive ye the Holy Ghost for the office of a presbyter, declaring the remission of sins upon the terms of the gospel." And this sense, says Whitby, corresponds with the several previous declarations made on the part of the bishop or presbyter*(b)*. The sense, therefore, of the protestant church, stands evidently opposed to the claims of the Romish church; though it were much to be wished, that the compilers of the offices of ordination had been more explicit with respect to the true scriptural and rational sense, in which they were therein appointed to be used.

(b) See Bishop Whitby's Sermons, X. p, 264, 265.

It

It is likewiſe obſervable that, though purſuant to our Lord's promiſe, infinite wiſdom ſaw fit to add ſupernatural qualifications, for the great ends and purpoſes of their office, beſides the privilege of being cotemporaries with Chriſt, and learning from him the great doctrines and duties of the Chriſtian religion; yet our Lord cautions his apoſtles againſt an abſolute dependence on ſuch extraordinary communications. *Behold*, ſays he, *I ſend you forth as ſheep among wolves; be ye therefore wiſe as ſerpents and harmleſs as doves*, intimating that, notwithſtanding their ſpecial call and commiſſion, and the extraordinary aſſiſtance they ſhould receive, they were, nevertheleſs, to remember they were dependent on the divine energies, and had no claim to infallibility, as they were men, and ſhould therefore conduct themſelves with care, prudence, and circumſpection.

One of the moſt diſtinguiſhing miraculous powers communicated to the apoſtles, was the ability of conferring on others ſome ſpiritual gifts; and it has been often aſſerted, that they did this to ſome of the adult converts wherever they came; though what particular gifts or powers thoſe converts ſhould receive, in conſequence of their prayer and impoſition of their hands, was not ſolely at their choice, but dependent on the will and direction of the Divine Spirit, who knew beſt what was proper, both for particular perſons, and for the common intereſt of Chriſtianity†. This extraordinary manifeſtation of the ſpirit, which attended the public miniſtration of the goſpel, is ſometimes repreſented as a plenteous and viſible effuſion of the divine ſpirit*, and at other times, in a leſſer degree, conferred by the laying on of the hands of the apoſtles. Theſe peculiar and extraordinary gifts and powers of the apoſtles, plainly ſhew how well qualified they were for their important undertaking, by demoliſhing the falſe religion, which had ſo long prevailed in the world, and eſtabliſhing the principles of Chriſtianity with all its

* Act iv. 13. viii. 39. Acts x. 44.

† See Dr. Benſon of the Propagation of Chriſtianity.

genuine effects, knowledge, righteouſneſs, and happineſs, in the world.

The learned are indeed much divided with reſpect to the miraculous powers reſiding in the apoſtles, and communicated by them to their ſucceſſors, or ſubſiſting in the Chriſtian church ſince their time. Theſe are points I ſhall not attempt to determine, but refer the readers to ſome of the moſt learned and judicious writers on the ſubject†.

Particular Churches eſtabliſhed.

The apoſtles, in conſequence of their office and commiſſion, were likewiſe to erect or eſtabliſh churches in every place; and to appoint paſtors or elders, whoſe office and buſineſs it ſhould be to watch over the particular ſocieties of Chriſtians for their good, by teaching and inſtructing, by reproving and admoniſhing, and by performing every good office for the eſtabliſhing of their faith and virtue, and it was their method to conſtitute the firſt or ableſt converts, in every city or place, to that office*, by and with the conſent of that ſociety.

And the Apoſtles, we are informed, were not only indefatigable, but very ſucceſsful in their apoſtolical office, planting the churches of Jeruſalem, of Samaria, Cæſarea, Antioch, Philipi, Theſſalonica, Berea, Corinth, Epheſus, Coloſſe, Troas, Ptolemais, Damaſcus, beſides many others in Aſia, as Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, &c‖.

† Millar's Propagation of the Goſpel, vol. I. p. 273, and ſequel. Doctor Benſon's Hiſtory of the firſt Planting the Chriſtian Religion, vol. I. from p. 38 to 66. Doctor Middleton's Introductory Diſcourſe concerning the Miraculous Powers. Jackſon's Remarks, &c.

* Clemens Romanus ad Corinth. p. 54.

‖ For the time when theſe churches were planted, ſee Dr. Benſon's Account of the firſt Planting of the Chriſtian Churches, vol. 1. Chriſtianiſmus Primitivus, b. ii. ch. 1. p. 6. Rev. Mr. Whiſton's Primitive Chriſtianity, in four books.

Mr. Whiſton has given us the following catalogue of the firſt thirty biſhops ordained by the apoſtles.

			A.D.
I.	Jeruſalem,	1 James, the Lord's brother, by the apoſtles,	30
		2 Simeon, the ſon of Cleophas, by the apoſtles, -	71
		3 Judas, the ſon of James, by the apoſtles, -	74
II.	Cæſarea,	1 Zacchæus, the Publican,	64
		2 Cornelius, the Centurion,	67
		3 Theophilus by Luke,	86
III.	Antioch,	1 Euodius, - - - Peter	50
		2 Ignatius, - - - Paul	67
IV.	Alexandria,	1 Annianus, - - - Mark	62
V.	Rome,	1 Linus, the ſon of Claudia, Paul	55
		2 Anencletus, 3 Clements, Peter	67
VI.	Epheſus,	1 Timothy, - - - Paul	57
		2 John, - - - - John	70
VII.	Smyrna,	1 Ariſto I. - - - John	64
		2 Stratæus, the ſon of Lois, John	70
		3 Ariſto II. - - - John	78
VIII.	Pergamus,	1 Gaius, - - - - John	67
IX.	Philadelphia,	1 Demetrius, - - - John	67
X.	Cenchrea,	1 Lucius, - - - Paul	67
XI.	Crete,	1 Titus, - - - - Paul	67
XII.	Athens,	1 Dionyſius, - - - Paul	67
XIII.	Tripoli,	1 Marathones, - - Paul	67
XIV.	Laodicea,	1 Archippus, - - Paul	67
XV.	Coloſſæ,	1 Philemon, - - - Paul	67
XVI.	Berea,	1 Oneſimus, - - - Paul	67
XVII.	Galatia,	1 Creſcens, - - - Paul	67
XVIII.	Aſia,	2 Acquila, 1 Niceras, - - Paul	67
XIX.	Ægina,	1 Criſpus, - - - - Paul	67

Each

Each of these comes under the denomination of *a particular church*, that is of a company of believers at one time, and at the same place, associating themselves together, and concurring in the participation of all the institutions and ordinances of Jesus Christ, with their proper pastors or ministers §.

At first the numbers in such churches were very few: Tertullian says, that three were sufficient to make a church; probably in allusion to our Lord's promise, that *where two or three were gathered together in his name, he would be in the midst of them.* Their number, however, was indefinite, but their character is that of the *elect, called and sanctified* by the will of God. They were first called Christians at Antioch, and, in innumerable places, they are called *the brethren*, because of their brotherly love and affection; and the *faithful*, in opposition to those who did not believe in the Lord Jesus, or his gospel †.

HISTORY *of the* CHURCH *of* ROME.

It is evident from the New Testament, that soon after Christianity was promulged by the apostles, there was a Christian church established at Rome, a community *called of God to be saints, such as had by baptism been planted together in the likeness of Christ's death*, and professed to walk in newness of life; who are said *to have obeyed from the heart the form of doctrine delivered unto them—to stand in the Christian church by faith—and that their faith was celebrated throughout the world.* Romans i. 7, 8. Romans vi. 4, 5 ‖.

Church of Rome, A. D. 55.

§ King's Primitive Church, p. 3.

† Ibid. p. 8.

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The general doctrine of the church of Rome is, that Peter was not only appointed by our Saviour the chief of the apoſtles; but that he was conſtituted the firſt biſhop of Rome, and head of the univerſal church, and that after having been ſeven years biſhop of Antioch, he was, in the modern phraſe, tranſlated to Rome, and continued to be biſhop there twenty-five years, and then ſuffered martyrdom under the emperor Nero. A. D. 64, according to Blair, 68; according to Whiſton.

But it is not certain which of the apoſtles firſt preached the goſpel at Rome; ſome aſſert, that St. Peter came to Rome only occaſionally to viſit that church, and was, by order of the Emperor Nero, crucified with St. Paul, who was charged with having made many proſelytes to Chriſtianity there.

But that Peter never was biſhop of Rome, is demonſtrated by many credible hiſtorians and divines*, particularly *Budæus de Eccleſ. Apoſtolic.*

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Secondly, When the apoſtle Paul, in his epiſtle to the Romans, ſalutes the Chriſtians and his fellow-labourers by name, he ſays not one word of Peter; and when even commending the faith of the Church, he never mentions one word of the ſuppoſed founder of it.

Thirdly, St. Peter himſelf ſpeaks not one word of what the Papiſts aſſert or alledge in this matter. If he had founded the Roman church, why does he no where mention it? why does he, when writing to the diſperſed Jews, no where aſſert his claim and prerogative?

Fourthly, The aſſertion of his being biſhop of Rome twenty-five years, is inconſiſtent with the ſacred chronology of thoſe times; for from the time of Chriſt's death, which was in the 18th year of Tiberius, to the 13th year of Nero, when Peter was crucified, was only thirty-ſix years, viz. five in Tiberius's reign, four in Caligula's, fourteen in Claudius's, and thirteen in Nero's. Now Peter did not go out of Judea till twelve years after our Lord's death; then he

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That Christ ever established a monarchy in his church, or appointed Peter his viceroy, who invested the bishops of Rome, as his successors, with dominion over the whole church of Christ, are points so solidly confuted, that we may safely pass them over as things utterly unknown in the most primitive and pure ages. On the contrary, it is undeniable, that when, towards the end of this century, the first and eldest of the presbyters at Rome, as in other churches, was distinguished by the title of bishop; that appellation imported no more than chief among the elders, who were otherwise all equal in office, duty, and privilege §; from hence the title of bishop took its rise.

Origin of the title of bishops.

The church of Rome was then subject to no other, and no other church subject to it, the bishop having no superintendence over other churches.

As for the word diocese, by which the bishop's charge is now usually expressed, as including many churches in it, I do not remember, says Sir Peter King‡,

he was cast into prison by Herod, Acts, c. xii. which was the fourth year of the Emperor Claudius, and the last of King Agrippa; six years after that, or the eighteenth year after Christ's crucifixion, we find him present at a synod at Jerusalem, Acts xv. and according to the catholic church, he was seven years at Antioch; so there remains only eleven years in which he could possibly be at Rome, and indeed there is no evidence of his ever being there in that capacity.

Fifthly, Peter being an apostle of the circumcision, Gal. ii. 7, 8. we have reason to believe, that when Paul was carried to Rome, Peter visited the Jews, who were dispersed in Greece, Thracia, the Lesser Asia, Babylon, and the East, and reaped a good harvest amongst them, till he went to visit the church of Rome near the close of his life. When therefore the apostle, 1 Peter, v. 13. says, *The church that is at Babylon saluteth you*, he plainly writes of Babylon in the east, once the head of the Assyrian empire, where there was so great a concourse of Jews: and if it be granted that Peter had been at Rome, or resided there some time, or suffered martyrdom there, this is no reason for asserting his primacy or episcopacy in that city more than at Joppa, Antioch, or Babylon.

§ History of the Popes, translated from the German original of C. W. F. Walch, c. ii. p. 4.

‡ King's Primitive Church, p. 66. where he quotes Eusebius. Apud lib. v. c. xiv. p. 193.

that

that ever I found it uſed in this ſenſe by any of the ancients; but there is another word ſtill retained by us, by which they frequently denominated the biſhop's cure, that is, pariſh: ſo in the ſynodical epiſtles of Irenæus, the biſhopricks of Aſia are called pariſhes. Euſebius has given a variety of inſtances to confirm this reading, *viz.* the biſhop of the pariſh of Athens, the biſhop of the pariſh of Corinth, &c. denoting the ſame as we now call a pariſh, wherein a competent number of Chriſtians, dwelling near together, having one biſhop, paſtor, or miniſter, ſet over them, with whom they all met at one time, to worſhip and ſerve God. The word ſignifies a dwelling one by another; thus, according to Euſebius, lib. iv. c. xv. p. 228. the church of Smyrna writ to the church that pariſhed in Philomelium; and the epiſtle of Clemens Romanus is, to the church of God pariſhing at Corinth. Hitherto we find there were no ſuperintendents over many churches but the apoſtles; none appointed by them as patriarchs, or metropolitan biſhops; no prelates over many churches, or over other preſbyters; no one claiming rule, and the other ſubject to him,

Dioceſe, its primitive import.

There are, indeed, ſome authors have made a diſtinction between biſhops and preſbyters, and they quote Ignatius, who lived at the beginning of the ſecond century, as appropriating the title of biſhop, ἐπίσκοπος, or overſeer, to that miniſter who was the more immediate overſeer or governor of his pariſh; and that of elder or preſbyter, to him who had no particular care or inſpection of a pariſh, but was only an aſſiſtant or curate to a perſon that had; the word ἐπίσκοπος, or biſhop, denoting a relation to a flock, or cure; πρεσβύτερος, or preſbyter, ſignifying only a power or ability to take the charge of ſuch flocks or cure; the former implying an actual diſcharge of the office, the latter a power ſo to do. This diſtinction was ſometimes followed by the ſucceeding fathers; but oftimes, according to primi-

Biſhop's office diſtinguiſhed from a preſbyter.

tive uſage, they indifferently apply thoſe terms to each of thoſe perſons §: ſo that it is evident that the ſuperiority of the biſhop, in office and character, was, to this time, at beſt precarious, deſtitute of divine inſtitution, or direction of the apoſtles, but was introduced in the next century, as we ſhall ſhew in its proper place.

For theſe reaſons probably the Rev. Mr. Bolde has aſſerted, that epiſcopacy was not eſſential to a particular Chriſtian church; or that a viſible ſociety of creditably profeſſing Chriſtians ſhould have a ſpecial relation to, or dependence on, one man, of a dignified character, who ſhall claim a right to preſide over, and govern many aſſemblies of Chriſtians; I ſpeak only of a particular Chriſtian church, and not concerning particular churches eſtabliſhed by civil governments‖. He adds, It is likewiſe agreeable to primitive practice, that a particular Chriſtian church, ſubſiſting agreeably to Chriſt's inſtitution, derived a power to appoint a perſon, or perſons, ſo qualified as he directs, to officiate amongſt and unto them‡. But they were firſt to become, as it were, candidates for the miniſtry; muſt be approved of by the majority; and ſeparated, or ſet apart to this office, by the laying on of the hands of the biſhop, or preſbytery; and when the biſhop of a church was dead, all the people of that church met together in one place, to chooſe a new biſhop. Thus Sabinus was elected biſhop of Emerita, by the ſuffrage of all the brotherhood; and Fabianus was choſen biſhop of Rome†.

And this order of admitting none to any eccleſiaſtical function but by an election of the faithful, in a general aſſembly, was inviolably obſerved in the church for more than 200 years*.

§ King's Primitive Church, p. 66. who quotes Euſebius apud lib. v. cap. xiv. p. 193.

‖ Bolde on Church Power, occaſioned by the Bangorian Controverſy, p. 59.

‡ Ibid. p. 60.

† Apud Cyp. Epiſt. lxviii. ſ. vi. p. 102. Apud Euſeb. lib. vi. cap. xxviii. p. 229.

* Father Paul of Beneficial Matters, p. 56.

As

As the apoſtles office and buſineſs was to propagate the goſpel, and to ordain the elected biſhops or elders, for the care of particular churches; and the moſt important charge of preaching, explaining, and inculcating the great doctrines and duties of the Chriſtian religion; whoſe buſineſs it ſhould be to adminiſter the ſacraments of baptiſm, and the Lord's ſupper, to the people or church over whom they were appointed; ſo the apoſtles, as the occaſion and circumſtances of things required, and the better to anſwer the purpoſes of Chriſtian ſocieties, did, by and with the advice and approbation of their fellow Chriſtians, appoint the office of *Deacons*. Thoſe, at their firſt appointment and inſtitution, were ſix in number, who occaſionally baptiſed, but generally only aſſiſted at the adminiſtration of baptiſm, at the Lord's ſupper, in the care of the poor, and the viſitation of the ſick: hence the offices of biſhops and deacons in the Chriſtian church, to anſwer the purpoſes beforementioned, were always eſteemed of apoſtolical inſtitution.

The office of Deacons.

The particular ceremony by which any biſhop, paſtor, or deacon, was ſet apart after the choice of the people, was by the laying on of hands of a biſhop, or preſbyter, and prayer. By theſe ſolemn acts, many of the ordained elders were not only ſet a-part, but it pleaſed God, as an eternal evidence of their miſſion, to confer extraordinary gifts and graces, whereby they were qualified, in an extraordinary manner, for the diſcharge of their important office †, and even to their ſucceſſors. It is

Of ordination.

† Hence the pope and biſhops of the catholic church do, as the vicar of Chriſt, and ſucceſſors of the apoſtles, aſſert, that by their ordination of prieſts they are thereby conſecrated to their reſpective functions, and alſo receive grace to diſcharge them *(a)*. And in this particular likewiſe the modeſty and good ſenſe of our church

(a) Profeſſion of Catholic Faith, p. 5. compared with the Definition of Holy Orders, p. 23.

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(a) Profeſſion of Catholic Faith, p. 5. compared with the Definition of Holy Orders, p. 23.

generally allowed, ſome ſupernatural and extraordinary gifts and powers were communicated for planting Chriſtian churches, and their greater edification: but how long this continued in the Chriſtian church, the learned are not agreed.

Confirmation.

The ordinance of laying on of hands by the biſhop or preſbyter, was likewiſe performed on the newly-baptiſed. and this was ſome times attended with extraordinary gifts, ſuch as might tend to the furtherance of the goſpel; but was not in general performed with any ſuch promiſe, or followed with ſuch wonderful effects, but was then uſed as a rite of the Chriſtian church, by which was ſignified their being ſeparated and dedicated to the ſervice of God.

Thus we have not only taken a view of the foundation of the Chriſtian church, as it was laid by Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, but likewiſe of the peculiar qualifications, duty, and buſineſs of the apoſtles, for propagating the goſpel and eſtabliſhing Chriſtian churches throughout the world, in the firſt century of the Chriſtian church; and hitherto the apoſtles, notwithſtanding their dignity, did not pretend to infallibility, did not aſſume authority over the conſciences of their fellow Chriſtians, but gave many inſtances of their zeal, diligence, and faithfulneſs; the more venerable and praiſe-worthy, as it was always accompanied with modeſty and humility. As the apoſtles received this commiſſion from Chriſt, they were bound to confine

is conſpicuous: for neither the biſhop pretends, nor the perſon receiving orders is taught to believe, that any ſanctity, dignity, or privilege, with reſpect to the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit, are conveyed by the impoſition of the biſhop's hands at this ordination; and that nothing more is intended by the biſhop, in this part of the ſervice, *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt*, than his ſolemn wiſh, directed to heaven, that he might receive the Holy Ghoſt for the office and work of a prieſt, to which he is ſet apart by the impoſition of his hands *(a)*.

(a) Biſhop Whitby's Sermons, with which correſponds Doctor Benſon's account of this matter before cited.

them-

themſelves wholely to it, and not to exceed the limits of it: they were his ſervants who ſent them, and the meſſage they received from him, that, and that only, were they to deliver to the world. Thus St. Paul ſays of himſelf, that *God had committed to him the word of reconciliation*, 2 Cor. v. 20. *and that he was an ambaſſador for Chriſt, that he preached not himſelf, but Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, and himſelf the ſervant of others for Jeſus ſake; that he had no dominion over others faith*, 2 Cor. i. 24. no power to impoſe upon them arbitrary things or articles of faith, which he had not received from Chriſt; and that this was the principal matter of his comfort, that *he had not ſhunned to declare* all the council of God. Acts xx. 27.

The apoſtles recommends a free and impartial enquiry after truth, and enjoins it on his fellow Chriſtians to ſearch the ſcriptures; and it is evident, by comparing ſome paſſages of the evangeliſts with their epiſtles, that the canon of the books of the Old Teſtament was aſcertained by them*: and St. Paul directs his epiſtles to the Corinthians, *to all that in every place call upon the Lord Jeſus*; and the other epiſtles of the apoſtles in general, are inſcribed, with equal latitude, and were, with the other parts of the New Teſtament, made the criterion of truth to all Chriſtians.

Indeed we have no full and certain account of the doctrine taught by Chriſt and his apoſtles, but from the records of the New Teſtament; and as theſe contain the whole revelation of the goſpel, all that we are to believe and practiſe as Chriſtians, it is an undeniable conſequence, that Chriſtians can no better demonſtrate their ſubjection and fidelity to Chriſt, as Lord and lawgiver in his church, than by acquainting themſelves with the ſacred records of truth, and religiouſly adhering to

Scripture the rule of faith.

* Doctor Coſin of the Canon of Scripture, p. 22.

them, as the only rule and ſtandard of their faith and worſhip†.

If you aſk, what form of worſhip took place in this early age of the Chriſtian church, Tertullian informs us, the ſcriptures were firſt read, then pſalms ſung, then a ſermon preached, and prayers preſented‡. Thus Juſtin Martyr writes: they firſt begun their public worſhip with reading the writings of the prophets; and as ſoon as they had them in M. S. the epiſtles of the apoſtles; afterwards they ſung pſalms, then they preached the word, which was a commentary on the leſſons read, and then concluded with prayer and interceſſion‖.

The diſcipline they obſerved was no other than the execution of thoſe laws preſcribed by the apoſtles, for the correction and prevention of ſuch offences as were incident to the members of the church of Chriſt, in which great regard was had to the nature of the offence, and, except in the moſt criminal inſtances, was always exerciſed with much lenity and gentleneſs, in the conſciouſneſs of their own imperfection and liability to err.

It is indeed obſervable, that notwithſtanding the ſimplicity of doctrines, worſhip, and ceremonies, that was preſerved in the apoſtolic age, there were ſome different apprehenſions amongſt the Jewiſh proſelytes to Chriſtianity, touching ſome of the Jewiſh rites; and, for the ſake of truth and peace, we find the apoſtles thought it requiſite to conſult together, and accordingly aſſembled at Jeruſalem, A. C. 53. in which the apoſtles diſpenſed with an obſervation of the ceremonial law, ſeeing that the Chriſtian diſpenſation was ſufficient to the ſalvation of its votaries. Acts xv. 11.

They likewiſe held another council at Jeruſalem, A. D. 60. in which they tolerated ſome legal obſer-

† Doctor Chandler's Notes of the Church, p. 13, 15.
‡ De Animâ, c. iii. p. 530.
‖ Apology ii. p. 98.

vnces

vances for a time, that by ſuch condeſcenſion the weaker part, both of Jews and Gentiles, might be gained to the belief and profeſſion of Chriſtianity, Acts xxi. 18—22.

There is no mention made in the New Teſtament, nor any other authentic proof in this century, that any council was called to compile canons for the order and government, or creeds and ſummaries of faith, for uniformity of ſentiments in the Chriſtian churches. Decrees of this kind much better ſuit with the ambition and authority aſſumed by ſome eccleſiaſtics in later time: though I am ſenſible a work of this kind has long ſince made its appearance in the world under that ſpecious character*: but we have many teſtimonies of the primitive Chriſtians

* This book is ſaid to be compiled by Clement, biſhop of Rome, who was choſen to that office in the year 67, and died in 88: it is entitled Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, digeſted in eight books; conſiſting of 70 canons relating to the laity, and 85 with reſpect to the dignity, office, and duty of eccleſiaſtics: and the late Rev. and learned Mr. Whiſton has, with much pains, endeavoured to eſtabliſh their authenticity; in which he has likewiſe pointed out the order and method of the ſeveral matters therein contained, reſpecting doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and manners; in which is likewiſe inſerted the canon of ſcripture, approved and recommended by the apoſtles, which were extant before the year 63, together with the Baptiſmal Creed, and one other formulary or creed, chiefly calculated to promote the doctrine of Arius with regard to the ſubordination of the Son to the Father.

Then follows an Eſſay on the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, wherein our author endeavours to ſhew their conſiſtency with the doctrines taught by Chriſt and his apoſtles; quotes a variety of teſtimonies from the fathers and hiſtorians of ſeveral ſucceeding centuries, in proof of ſome or other of thoſe conſtitutions, or whoſe ſentiments coincided with them. That they are of great antiquity, will not be denied; but that they have no juſt claim to the authority contended for, will, I preſume, be readily admitted by any one who compares the contents of them with the doctrines contained in the New Teſtament.

For beſides the entire ſilence of the New Teſtament concerning them, which, to me, is no ſmall proof that they are ſpurious, ſeveral of thoſe canons carry with them apparent marks of mere modern invention. The dignity and power of the clergy is here, like the hierarchy of the church of Rome, ſtretched to ſuch an exorbitant height, as could hardly be conſiſtent with Chriſtian liberty, or with the ſafety of Chriſtians, eſpecially under heathen governors.—To them

was

Chriſtians invariable regerd to the doctrines and examples of our Lord and his apoſtles; and by the Steadfaſtneſs of their faith, ſimplicity of their worſhip and behaviour, were an honour to their profeſſion as Chriſtians; but notwithſtanding theſe exemplary lives, there was ſuch an oppoſition in the principles of Chriſtianity, to the practices and views of the heathen Emperors, that they perſecuted the Chriſtians with the greateſt ſeverity.

Firſt perſecution.

The firſt perſecution of the Chriſtians began at Rome, A. D. 64. Among others St. Peter and St. Paul ſuffered martyrdom*.

That called the ſecond perſecution of the Chriſtians, began in the reign of Domitian, A. D. 95 †.

This,

was to be committed the care of the eccleſiaſtical revenue, for which they were accountable to none but God.—Moreover, the titles given the prieſts, in ſome places, are impious: they are not only ſtiled prophets, rulers, kings, and governors, but alſo mediators between God and his faithful people, and in chap. xxvi. and chap. xxix. ſtiled gods.—They mention the uſing holy oil for anointing the candidates before, and of ointments for ſealing them after, baptiſm—of uſing water with the wine in the Lord's ſupper.—They recommend pecuniary fines for ſin, prayers, or offerings and feſtivals for the dead—eſteem and honour for the reliques of ſaints, and other ceremonies equally ſuperſtitious and unſcriptural: for which me muſt refer the reader to Mr. Whiſton's Primitive Chriſtianity Revived, book iii. to which is added his defence.

But ſo incongruous did the general tenour of them appear to the New Teſtament, and ſo unſatisfactory his defence, that they were cenſured by the convocation at Canterbury, A. D. 1711. The form of which is as follows:

Whereas the ſaid William Whiſton, the better to ſupport his heretical opinions, ſpeaking of a book commonly called the Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, hath theſe words: "I have, I think, certainly found, that thoſe Apoſtolical Conſtitutions, which the Antichriſtian church hath ſo long laid aſide as ſpurious and heretical, are no other than the original laws and doctrines of the goſpel, the new covenant, or moſt ſacred ſtandard of Chriſtianity, equal in their authority to the four goſpels themſelves, and ſuperior in authority to the epiſtles of ſingle apoſtles; ſome parts of them being our Saviour's own original laws, delivered to the apoſtles; and the other parts the public acts of the apoſtles themſelves, met in council at Ceſarea and Jeruſalem, a little before their death; and that this was the con-

* Blair. † Ibid.

This, however, as it was a trial of their faith, their patience, their ſincerity, their fortitude, and magnanimity, thoſe virtues ſhone ſo conſpicuous in their lives, even unto death, as render them amiable and illuſtrious examples to future generations.

CENTURY THE SECOND.

Century the ſecond affords us ſome inſtances, in which the church of Rome varied from her primitive ſtate*.

The

conſtant opinion and teſtimony of the earlieſt ages of the goſpel:" We cannotbut declare theſe aſſertions concerning a book, *which was never yet acknowledged as part of the canon of ſcripture by any general council, nor received as ſuch in any Chriſtian church*, to be highly abſurd and impious, tending to create in the minds of Chriſtians great uncertainties, as to their rule of faith, and to ſubvert that faith which was once delivered to the ſaints, and which is preſerved in the books of the New Teſtament, received in our church.

* It has been already obſerved, that it is very unlikely, that Peter was ever biſhop of the particular ſociety or congregation of Chriſtians at Rome; becauſe he could not execute ſuch an office without quitting his apoſtleſhip, and thereby betraying that truſt which Chriſt had repoſed in him: but if this were granted, nothing can juſtly be inferred from thence in favour of any apoſtolical power or juriſdiction, which might be ſuppoſed to deſcend from him to his ſucceſſors the biſhops of Rome, or to any other biſhop; becauſe the biſhop of Rome did not ſucced St. Peter in his apoſtolical, but in his epiſcopal character only (*a*) . . . . Moſt vain it muſt therefore be, for the late biſhops of Rome, or any other biſhop, to lay claim to the power of the keys, let that power be what it will, or any other apoſtolical power or juriſdiction whatever, ſeeing no ſuch power has, or could be deſcended, to them. For the apoſtolical commiſſion extended no farther than the *fourteen apoſtles*, and therefore, when the apoſtles died, the apoſtolic office, and conſequently all apoſtolic power, died with them.

It is likewiſe obſervable, how vain the pretence is, that the biſhops and clergy of the church of Rome have been continued by a *regular uninterrupted ſucceſſion* from the apoſtles down to the preſent time; whereas, according to the account of father Paul (*b*), the ſucceſſion of biſhops and clergy has been greatly interrupted: thus, not only in the apoſtles time, but down to the end of this century, thoſe, appointed to any offices in Chriſtian ſocieties, were elected, or ſet apart, to their reſpective offices by the body of Chriſtians; that is, by

(*a*) *See Barrow on the Pope's Supremacy, Chubb's True Goſpel.*
(*b*) *Father Paul's Account of Beneficiary Matters, p.* 5, 6.

The union of different churches in ſucceeding times, however ſalutary in itſelf, was attended with many abuſes, eſpecially the union of thoſe churches which had before, either by their ſituation, or by new congregations, been connected, furniſhed a ſpacious opportunity for one church to acquire more authority than others; and this was chiefly the caſe of thoſe churches, as were moſt conſiderable in number, or could claim apoſtolical foundation, or in the capital of a province.

All theſe circumſtances contributed to raiſe the credit and dignity of the church of Rome: her biſhop gradually diſtinguiſhed himſelf more and more from the elders. We meet with encomiums upon that church ſo early as in the ſecond century: but theſe, by no means, prove that other churches ſubmitted to her; the contrary manifeſtly appears from the inſtances of the Aſiatic churches in that early diſpute, concerning the fitneſs, expediency, and duty of obſerving Eaſter, commonly called the celebration of Eaſter *.

The firſt conſiderable invaſion on the church liberties was made by Victor, biſhop of Rome, about the year 195, relating to the time of celebrating Eaſter day. The Chriſtians of Aſia the Leſs kept it on the 14 day after the firſt new moon that followed the vernal equinox, on what day ſoever it happened. On the contrary, the churches of Rome, France, Corinth, &c. held, that Eaſter day ought always to be on a Sunday. Victor, who could not eaſily decide the controverſy, without more a-do excommunicated all the Chriſtian churches of Aſia—at leaſt ſo far as to withdraw from, and refuſe communion, with the Aſiatic churches on that account, according to Euſebius, to whom we refer the reader.

by that ſociety they were appointed to ſerve. And though the uſing, or applying the outward ſign of ſuch election, by laying on of hands, and of praying for God's bleſſing, was performed by the biſhop; yet that did not affect the act of the ſociety or congregation, whoſe miniſter he was, or the independency of one church on another; but was a mere appendix to it.

* See Irenæus Adverſ. Hæreſ. and Walch's Hiſt. Eccleſ. ch. i. ſects. ii. v. and viii.

The office of a biſhop was now held ſuperior to that of Preſbyters; but it is not demonſtrable, that the biſhops of Rome had titles of honour ſuperior to other biſhops, or a right to controul the conduct of other churches †.

† Concerning the names of Papa, Epiſcopus, Epiſcoparum, and Pontifax Maximus, ſaid to have been given by Juſtin Martyr and Tertullian, to the biſhop of Rome, ſee Walch's Hiſt. Eccleſ.

Chillingworth, the proteſtant champion, beſides many other divines, has wrote largely in defence of epiſcopacy; and all, in general, agree in this point, that it was not introduced in the firſt century, or by the apoſtles, though they unqueſtionably prove, that this office, or ſuperior dignity in the church, was inſtituted, or generally in uſe, as early as the ſecond century.

Mr. Chillingworth defines epiſcopacy, to be the choice of one man of eminent ſanctity and ſufficiency to have the care of all the churches within a certain precinct or dioceſe, and furniſhing him with authority, not abſolute or abitrary; but under the regulation of laws, to the intent, that all churches under him may be provided with good and able paſtors. This he apprehends, 1ſt, is not repugnant to the government ſettled in, and for the church, by the apoſtles; 2d, That it is as well calculated for the reformation of any evil in the church, or the introduction of any good which we deſire to introduce, as any other form of government; and 3d, That there is no law upon record of our Saviour againſt it. He quotes Petrus Molinæus, who, in his Defence of Preſbyterial Government, acknowledgeth, that preſently after the apoſtles times, it was ordained, that in every city, one of the preſbytery ſhould be called a biſhop, who ſhould have preeminence over his colleagues, to avoid that confuſion which oftimes ariſeth out of equality, &c. He likewiſe quotes Theodorus Beza, to the ſame purport (*a*).

The late biſhop Hoadly (*b*) ſays, We think we can demonſtrate, that in the primitive times, the adminiſtration of eccleſiaſtical affairs was in the hands of biſhops, who had preſbyters ſubject to them, that as the apoſtles maintained a ſuperiority over the preſbyters of the churches they conſtituted, ſo, upon occaſion of their abſence, they ſettled others in this ſuperiority; that as theſe, thus ſucceeding the apoſtles, had the power of ordination committed to them, ſo their ſucceſſors, in the following ages, claimed this power as their right, and looked upon ordination to be their office in the regular courſe of things.

Bingham (*c*) treats more largely of the antiquity, authority, and dignity of epiſcopacy, their honorary titles, and venerable character.

(*a*) *Chilingworth of Epiſcopacy, annexed to his other works, from p.* 1, *to* 5, *incluſive.*

(*b*) *Hoadly's Reaſonableneſs of Conformity, p.* 3.

(*c*) *Bingham's Antiquities of the Chriſtian Church abridged, from p.* 50 *to* 100.

Again,

Again the perſonal characters of the biſhops and fathers in this century, give them no ſuperiority or advantage over other churches, or their ſucceſſors, ſince it is apparent they were leſs learned and more credulous, and in many reſpects more defective, than ſome of later time; for there was never any period of time in all eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, in which ſo many rank hereſies were publickly profeſſed, nor in which ſo many ſpurious books were publiſhed under the names of Chriſt and his apoſtles, and apoſtolic writers *.

Apoſtles creed firſt introduced.

However, a variety of opinions prevailed in this century, inſomuch that the biſhops began to compoſe formularies or creeds for their reſpective churches, or in oppoſition to ſome principal errors; and this ſeems to be the earlieſt period when part of what is called the apoſtles creed was introduced §.

A ſuper-

* Archbiſhop Wake, in his Preliminary Diſcourſe to the Genuine Epiſtles of the Apoſtolic Fathers, p. 89, Where he has given us a liſt of a great part of thoſe ſpurious pieces, with a ſhort account of each—In which he tells us it would be endleſs, to inſiſt on all the ſpurious pieces, which were only attributed to St. Paul; but that the ſuperſtitious books aſcribed to St. Peter his Acts, his Goſpel, his Revelation, were in much greater authority, even to the time of Euſebius, (ſect. xviii. xix.); he obſerves alſo, that the book called the Recognitions of St. Clement, which he takes to be the moſt learned, as well as the moſt ancient of any of thoſe pieces, was not ſet forth till about the middle of the ſecond century, and is rejected by Euſebius as one of thoſe many impoſtures, which were even then publiſhed under the name of that ſaint, ſect. xxviii.

§ Having mentioned the apoſtles creed, it may be proper to give a general account thereof. The learned author of the Critical Hiſtory of this creed very juſtly acknowledges, that this creed was not the work of one man, or of a day, (he might have ſaid, nor of one century). The ancient fathers never indeed called it by the name of the apoſtles creed, but ſay it was agreeable to what they taught. Moſt of the articles are indiſputably ſo; ſome of them are ſaid to be derived from Philip's requiring of the eunuch a profeſſion of his faith in Chriſt, as the Son of God, as a pre-requiſite to his being baptized: and, for a conſiderable time, the chriſtian biſhops contented themſelves with ſome ſuch general form of words, without any particular explication of the nature and action of God, or the ſtate of the Son. The reaſon of the additional articles ſeems to be this: not

A ſuperſtitious veneration for utenſils and veſſels belonging to the church took place, ſo that none but the prieſts

not long after the apoſtles time, ſeveral hereſies ſprung up in the church, ſubverſive of the fundamentals of Chriſtianity, and even of all religion. Thus the firſt article, *I believe in God the Father*, was introduced in oppoſition to the Manichæans, who aſſerted two independent deities, A. D. 276. The word Almighty was alſo added to this article, againſt ſome Manichæans, who aſſerted, that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, were but one perſon. The ſecond article, *and in Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*, was introduced about the ſame time, in oppoſition to Sabellianiſm, who made the Son and Holy Spirit to be only virtues or emanations of the deity. The words, *he deſcended into hell*, were neither in the Roman nor oriental creeds. The phraſe, *communion of ſaints*, was not in any creed till above 400 years after Chriſt, and then not immediately received in all. The clauſe of *life everlaſting* was omitted in ſeveral; and whoever ſhall compare the Grecian or the French creed, recorded by Iræneus, thoſe of Carthage cited by Tertullian, that of Aquila, Hippo, Ravenna, or Turin, will find them all to vary; which, with other conſiderations, ſufficiently evidence the apoſtles could not be the authors of the creed that paſſes in their name (*b*). The repetition of the creed at every aſſembly was appointed in the eaſtern church by Timothy, archbiſhop of Conſtantinople, about the year 500 (*c*); about which time the biſhop of Antioch likewiſe preſcribed the reading of it at the public adminiſtration of divine ſervice. In the weſtern churches, at a ſynod of thirty-five biſhops, it was appointed to be read and explained to the Catechumens, who were afterwards to be admitted to baptiſm; but the general and conſtant reading thereof ſeems not to have prevailed in the weſtern churches, till five hundred years after Chriſt: by the decree of the third council of Toledo, it was enjoined to be read throughout all the chorches of Spain and Gallicia (*d*).

Mr. Whiſton aſſerts, that the Euſebian or Arian doctrine was, for the main, the doctrine of the church for the two firſt centuries (*e*). This doctrine was differently underſtood and repreſented at that time by Alexander; and, in like manner, the doctrine of Alexander miſrepreſented by Arius. Arius expreſsly aſſerts, in a letter to Euſebius, his intimate friend, "This is what we have and do profeſs, that the Son is not unbegotten, nor in any manner a part of the unbegotten God, nor from any part of the material world; but that, by the will and council of the Father, he exiſted before all time and ages, perfect God, the Only-begotten

(*a*) *Critical Hiſtory, p.* 32, 33.
(*b*) *Ibid. p.* 29.
(*c*) *Ibid. p.* 42, 43.
(*d*) *Theodor. Lector. Eccleſ. Hiſt. l.* ii. *p.* 563.
(*e*) *Memoirs of Dr. Clarke, p.* 10.

and

prieſts were permitted to handle them *. Laws were made for faſting on particular days, and followed with many ſuperſtitious obſervances †. Great controverſies aroſe about the lawfulneſs of baptizing infants, which have ever ſince continued a diſpute in the Chriſtian church ‡. Others were for limiting baptiſm to the time of Eaſter and Whitſuntide, while others held that all times were alike §. Others practiſed a trine immerſion, and Tertullian mentions it as a common practice ‖. But others immerſed the body only once, and adult believers made up the main body of the baptized ⸸. Baptiſm was then accompanied with the impoſition of hands, which was looked upon as the completion of baptiſm, generally performed by a trine immerſion of the Catechumen, at the name of the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghoſt* **.

The third perſecution of the Chriſtians, under Trajan the emperor, commenced A. D. 107. The fourth began under the emperor Adrian, 125; the fifth under Marcus Aurelius, A. C. 160.

CENTURY THE THIRD.

In the third century the biſhops exalted themſelves highly above other paſtors, and drew many dangerous conſequences from the doctrine of one catholic church. Some biſhops even claimed a ſuperiority to others, but

and Unchangeable; and that, therefore, before he was begotten or formed, he was not; but that there never was a time when he was not (*f*).

* Hiſtory of Popery, vol. II. p. 100.

† Ibid.

‡ See Dr. Wall's Hiſtory of Infant Baptiſm, and Dr. Gale's Anſwer.

§ Cave's Primitive Chriſtianity, p. 307.

‖ Tertullian adv. Marcion, lib. iii. p. 226.

⸸ Cave's Primitive Chriſtianity, p. 305. Compare Cave, Wall, Toogood, with Grantham, Gale, Gill, &c.

** See Lawrence R. of Yelvertoft's Chriſtian Morals, p. 192 to 196.

(f) Theod. C. H. l. i. *c.* 5, *cited by Dr. Chandler in his Introduction to Limberch's Hiſt. of the Inquiſition, p.* 24.

they

they were at the ſame time jealous of each other, and the doctrine of the equality of biſhops admitted of no ſuperiority §; they conſidered the biſhop of Rome as one of their brethren, and were offended at Stephen for pretending to preſcribe laws to them, though they willingly allowed the Roman church to be one of the principal.

It is therefore impoſſible that the other biſhops ſhould acknowledge him as their judge. Advice given in friendſhip and confidence implies no juriſdiction. It is admitted, however, that in the third century, a more immediate foundation was laid for that authority and pre-eminence which was afterwards aſſumed; but that neither the biſhops of Rome pretended to be infallible, nor others thought them ſo, is the more clear and demonſtrable: they themſelves giving proof of the contrary, both by their example, and by the ſtreſs they laid on councils.

The church of Rome conſiſted at firſt of teachers and hearers; the firſt were either elders or deacons, but ſo early as this century their offices were greatly increaſed, viz. biſhops, preſbyters, deacons, ſub-deacons, acolothiſt, readers, &c. but no mention was then made of the office or privilege of cardinals. In the moſt important concerns, the aſſent of the people was required, and the uſual circular letters were ſent to them‡.

The biſhop uſually obtained his office by election, in which the laity alſo voted. The impoſition of hands was occaſionally performed by biſhops in different places, of whom ſome attended on that occaſion.

The prieſts, deacons, and other clergy, ſays father Paul, were alſo preſented by the people, and ordained by the biſhop; or elſe nominated by the biſhop, and, with the conſent of the people, ordained by him. No perſon that was unknown was admitted, nor did the biſhop ordain any but ſuch as were approved, or indeed

§ See the Tranſlation of Walch's Hiſtory, p. 42.

‡ See Cornelius's Letter to Fabius, Biſhop of Antioch, in Conſtant. Epiſtol. Pontific.

propoſed by the people, whoſe concurrence was thought ſo neceſſary, that the Pope St. Leo, as he was ſirnamed, proves at large the invalidity of a biſhop's ordination without. In this all the fathers of the church in thoſe times agree; and Conſtance, being choſen biſhop of Milan by the clergy, St. Gregory thought he could not be conſecrated without the conſent of the inhabitants, who being at that time retired to Genoa to avoid the ravages of the barbarous nations, a meſſage was ſent to them at his inſtance, to know their pleaſure concerning it‖. Hiſtorians differ in characteriſing the Chriſtians at this time. St. Cyprian, in his account of the ſtate of the church juſt before the Decian perſecution, about the year 250, tells us, that the body of Chriſtians chiefly aimed at increaſing their patrimony; that there was no ſound faith or true devotion in the prieſt, no benevolence in their works, no diſcipline in their manners; that it was common to contract marriage with unbelievers, and that Chriſtians were proſtituted to the Gentiles; that biſhops, neglecting their divine ſtewardſhip, and the relief of the neceſſitous brethren in the church, became ſtewards in ſecular affairs, and in conſequence many errors and irregularities prevailed‡. The learned have reckoned ninety different hereſies, which all ſprang up within the three firſt centuries§.

But, perhaps, theſe accounts will be thought partial, and unfavourable to the ſtate of religion at the cloſe of this century, when the chriſtian church is ſo generally repreſented as retaining her primeval purity till after this period. I ſhall therefore give an abſtract from Dupin's Hiſtory of the Church:

He ſays, that "the fathers of the church to this time taught, that the principles of faith were the holy ſcriptures and tradition; that myſteries were to be believed, though they could not be comprehended; they ſpoke of

‖ Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 20.

‡ Abſtract from Dr. Middleton's Introductory Diſcourſe, p. 38, 39.

§ See Archb. Wake on the Fathers, quoted p. 30.

the

the nature of God, and his attributes, in a moſt excellent manner; they oppoſed, with great ſucceſs, the falſe divinities of the heathens, and the errors of thoſe who admitted of more gods than one; but they owned the Trinity of three perſons in one only God; acknowledged the divinity and eternity of the Word, and of the Holy Ghoſt, and in general all the articles of the apoſtles creed*."

There are extant ſome creeds or ſummaries of the Chriſtian faith, drawn up at the cloſe of this century, intended for the unity of faith in particular churches, as thoſe of Jeruſalem, Cæſarea, Antioch, Alexandria, and Rome; by comparing which together, the reader will perceive how the unity of the faith was preſerved, with a diverſity of expreſſion; and is an evident proof, that one univerſal form had not been pitched upon and preſcribed to the whole church: every biſhop was at liberty to draw up a creed for the uſe of his own church, only keeping to the analogy of faith and ſound doctrine‡.

Sir Peter King gives us the following account of the worſhip and ceremonies of the primitive church, viz. that they began their ſervice with reading the ſcriptures. Then every one ſang a hymn or pſalm out of the Bible, or of their own compoſing—that they ſometimes ſang alternately, and ſometimes conjointly. Then began their ſermon by way of expoſition of the leſſon and exhortation, generally by the biſhop of the pariſh. Afterwards all the congregation roſe up to prayers, which were offered through Chriſt. They uſed the Lord's prayer at the beginning of their devotions; yet they did not uſe that only, but ſuch other ſupplications to God, as the variety of their circumſtances required. They uſually prayed ſtanding with their hands and eyes lifted up to heaven, the miniſter exerciſing his gifts in ſuitable matter and apt expreſſion. Baptiſm,

* Dupin's Hiſtory of the three firſt Centuries.

‡ Cyprian's Ep. lxix. ad magnum Conſtit. Apoſt. lib. vii. c. xli.

he ſays, was performed by the biſhop or paſtor of the reſpective pariſh to Catechumens, who had given a firm aſſent to the articles of the Chriſtian faith, and likewiſe ſome proof of their reſolution to lead a good life. He alſo admits, that infants were baptiſed in this century, and immediately received the ſacrament; that this was generally called the Lord's ſupper, which was eating bread and drinking wine, firſt ſet apart by prayer and thankſgiving, in commemoration of Jeſus Chriſt. They partook of it, ſays Socrates, in a table geſture, eating as at their love-feaſts *.

Pliny the younger, the heathen, confeſſes to the emperor Trajan, that the cauſe of the Chriſtians was a matter worthy of deliberation, by reaſon of their number and character—that they uſually, on their ſolemn days, met together before ſun-riſing, and ſang hymns to God and Chriſt, whom they worſhipped, and obliged themſelves, by an oath, not to commit any wickedneſs †.

Mr. Cave gives us a large and moſt amiable account of the primitive Chriſtians: he ſays, their piety was active and zealous: afflicted innocence triumphant, their patience unconquerable under the greateſt trials and perſecutions: in ſhort, down to this period we ſhall ſee the divine and holy precepts drawn into action, and the moſt excellent ſpirit of the goſpel breathing in the hearts and lives of thoſe primitive Chriſtians ‡.

Nevertheleſs, they were greatly perſecuted, inſomuch that ſome were put to cruel deaths, and others driven from their habitations. That called the ſixth perſecution of the Chriſtians commenced under Septimus Severus, A. D. 202. The ſeventh perſecution began in the reign of Maximus Severus, A. D. 235. The eighth in the reign of Decius, A. D. 250. The ninth

* See Juſtin Martyr's Apology ii. p. 98. Socrates, lib. v. Tertullian de Oratione, p. 659. Delaun's Plea, p. 35. King's Primitive Church, P. II. p. 6, 9, 10, 12, 18, 26, 31, 37, 40, 54.

† Plinii lib. x. ep. xevii. p. 1387.

‡ Cave's Primitive Chriſtianity, part III. p. 205 to 389.

under

under Gallineus and Valerianus, A. D. 257 §. But, about the cloſe of this century, there was a dreadful famine in the eaſtern part of the empire, where Maximinus reigned, and a ſore plague, which affected the ſight of perſons; upon which the Chriſtians could not help obſerving, that Maximinus had inflicted the puniſhment of depriving ſome Chriſtians of their eyes; but that nevertheleſs they ſignalized themſelves for their piety and charity towards all perſons in this public calamity, and forced even the pagan adverſaries to admire and commend their behaviour †.

CENTURY THE FOURTH.

The fourth century furniſhes us with many tranſactions of an intereſting nature. Though hitherto Chriſtianity appears to have been propagated with tolerable ſimplicity, and the Chriſtian church retained much of its primeval purity, eſpecially with reſpect to manners, and in a great regard for the ſcriptures, the canon of which was ſettled about this time; and by theſe means the darkneſs of paganiſm was in a good meaſure baniſhed from a great part of the known world. We are nevertheleſs informed, that "ſoon after, the Chriſtian world fell into endleſs ſchiſms and contentions, and had deſtroyed, in great meaſure, that peace, love and charity, which the goſpel was intended to promote; and, inſtead thereof, provoked one another to malice. They loſt, in a great degree, the ſubſtance of their religion, while they eagerly contended for their own imaginations concerning it; and that by this means many of the ſuperſtitions and corruptions we now complain of in the church of Rome, were not only broached but eſtabliſhed *."

For more than three hundred years Chriſtianity lived and flouriſhed under diſcouragement and frequent

§ Euſebius ix. 8,
† Jortin's Remarks, v. III. p. 268.
* Sale's Preliminary Diſcourſe to the Koran.

he says, was performed by the bishop or pastor of the respective parish to Catechumens, who had given a firm assent to the articles of the Christian faith, and likewise some proof of their resolution to lead a good life. He also admits, that infants were baptised in this century, and immediately received the sacrament; that this was generally called the Lord's supper, which was eating bread and drinking wine, first set apart by prayer and thanksgiving, in commemoration of Jesus Christ. They partook of it, says Socrates, in a table gesture, eating as at their love-feasts *.

Pliny the younger, the heathen, confesses to the emperor Trajan, that the cause of the Christians was a matter worthy of deliberation, by reason of their number and character—that they usually, on their solemn days, met together before sun-rising, and sang hymns to God and Christ, whom they worshipped, and obliged themselves, by an oath, not to commit any wickedness †.

Mr. Cave gives us a large and most amiable account of the primitive Christians: he says, their piety was active and zealous: afflicted innocence triumphant, their patience unconquerable under the greatest trials and persecutions: in short, down to this period we shall see the divine and holy precepts drawn into action, and the most excellent spirit of the gospel breathing in the hearts and lives of those primitive Christians ‡.

Nevertheless, they were greatly persecuted, insomuch that some were put to cruel deaths, and others driven from their habitations. That called the sixth persecution of the Christians commenced under Septimus Severus, A. D. 202. The seventh persecution began in the reign of Maximus Severus, A. D. 235. The eighth in the reign of Decius, A. D. 250. The ninth

* See Justin Martyr's Apology ii. p. 98. Socrates, lib. v. Tertullian de Oratione, p. 659. Delaun's Plea, p. 35. King's Primitive Church, P. II. p. 6, 9, 10, 12, 18, 26, 31, 37, 40, 54.

† Plinii lib. x. ep. xevii. p. 1387.

‡ Cave's Primitive Christianity, part III. p. 205 to 389.

under

under Gallineus and Valerianus, A. D. 257 §. But, about the cloſe of this century, there was a dreadful famine in the eaſtern part of the empire, where Maximinus reigned, and a ſore plague, which affected the ſight of perſons; upon which the Chriſtians could not help obſerving, that Maximinus had inflicted the puniſhment of depriving ſome Chriſtians of their eyes; but that nevertheleſs they ſignalized themſelves for their piety and charity towards all perſons in this public calamity, and forced even the pagan adverſaries to admire and commend their behaviour †.

CENTURY THE FOURTH.

The fourth century furniſhes us with many tranſactions of an intereſting nature. Though hitherto Chriſtianity appears to have been propagated with tolerable ſimplicity, and the Chriſtian church retained much of its primeval purity, eſpecially with reſpect to manners, and in a great regard for the ſcriptures, the canon of which was ſettled about this time; and by theſe means the darkneſs of paganiſm was in a good meaſure baniſhed from a great part of the known world. We are nevertheleſs informed, that "ſoon after, the Chriſtian world fell into endleſs ſchiſms and contentions, and had deſtroyed, in great meaſure, that peace, love and charity, which the goſpel was intended to promote; and, inſtead thereof, provoked one another to malice. They loſt, in a great degree, the ſubſtance of their religion, while they eagerly contended for their own imaginations concerning it; and that by this means many of the ſuperſtitions and corruptions we now complain of in the church of Rome, were not only broached but eſtabliſhed *."

For more than three hundred years Chriſtianity lived and flouriſhed under diſcouragement and frequent

§ Euſebius ix. 8,
† Jortin's Remarks, v. III. p. 268.
* Sale's Preliminary Diſcourſe to the Koran.

perſecution. After the Roman empire became Chriſtian it was greatly corrupted, till the empire fell, and made way for the dominion and grandeur of the biſhop of Rome, under whom the corruption aroſe to an amazing height, and true Chriſtianity was almoſt loſt for ſeveral ages †.

Early in this century, in which the fathers Cyril, Baſil, Gregory, and Ambroſe, flouriſhed, was inſtituted the monaſtic life; but, notwithſtanding this inſtitution, and the pretence of ſanctity to countenance it, the love of power and riches appears from the conſequences to be predominant, or that it was at beſt founded in ſuperſtition.

From this time the church became modelled by aſſuming prieſts; the divines attempted to explain the myſteries of religion by the rules of logic, and impoſing articles of faith by authority, rather than convincing by argument.

In this century, the p[illegible]s of Rome laid the foundation of that monarchical [illegible]wer and grandeur to which they afterwards roſe.

One of the firſt and moſt eſſential ſteps was the erection of the dignity of patriarch, afterwards confirmed by the Nicene council; and thus the hierarchy or government of the church became modelled; according to the conſtitution of the Roman empire. This being the deſign of their meaſures, another fundamental principle was added to it, viz. that the precedence and authority of biſhops over others, ſhould be determined by the rank of the cities where they reſided; and of conſequence, in proceſs of time, as it could be effected, the biſhop of Rome muſt have the ſupremacy; and this was managed with ſo much art, as to be confirmed in the next council, without appearing to have previouſly made a point of it §.

† Dr. Benſon's Hiſtory of the firſt planting of Chriſtianity, p. 6.

§ Walch's Hiſtory of the Popes.

Conſtantine,

Conſtantine, who, for his gallant acts, was ſurnamed the Great, was the firſt emperor that declared himſelf a Chriſtian, A. D. 312, and conſtituted the croſs his banner: he reſtored peace and tranquillity to the Chriſtians, he built many noble churches and oratories, wherein he ſuffered no Gentile altars or images to be placed, nor any heatheniſh feſtivals to be ſolemnized §. He alſo wrote a large pathetic epiſtle to the provincial governors of the eaſt; where, with great wiſdom and piety, he exhorts all his ſubjects to embrace Chriſtianity: but, when he had uſed many gentle methods to reclaim the Gentile world, he proceeded by more ſevere methods to quell the pagan idolatry; uncovered their temples, and expoſed their idols; and at the ſame time took great care, that biſhops or paſtors were ſettled every where in the Chriſtian churches. Though this great prince was not baptiſed till a little before his death, which was May 22, A. D. 338.'

But when the church, under Conſtantine and his ſucceſſors, enjoyed the protection of the civil powers, the Chriſtians compared their preſent with their paſt condition, and called to mind the ſufferings of their predeceſſors, and the patience and fortitude which they had exerted, particularly in the laſt and ſevereſt perſecution. Theſe conſiderations raiſed in them an high, and indeed, in ſome meaſure, a juſt veneration for the martyrs. But it did not ſtop here, it ran into exceſs, and produced bad effects. Every rumour concerning the behaviour of thoſe ſaints was received without examination, and repreſented as meritorious, inſomuch that certain monks found their account in going about, under the pretence of ſelling their bones and reliques.

The fathers of thoſe times, as Athanaſius, Gregory, Nazianzen, but particularly Chryſoſtom, with his popular eloquence, contributed to the utmoſt of their power to encourage the ſuperſtitious veneration and

§ See Spanhemius and the Theodoſian Codex.

invocation of ſaints, the love of monkery, and the belief of miracles, wrought by monks and reliques. Some of thoſe fathers, particularly Gregory, were in other reſpects valuable men: but this was the diſtemper of thoſe times, and they were not free from it ‡.

Thence aroſe religious addreſſes to the martyrs, who were conſidered as patrons and interceſſors, which tended to leſſen the reliance and gratitude due to Chriſt, and to ſubſtitute new expedients in the room of rational piety and ſtrict morality.

Some inſtances during Conſtantine's reign are an undeniable proof where the government of the church was veſted, and how the biſhops of Rome were eſteemed as to their authority in thoſe days.

When Donatus ſtood condemned as a heretic by the churches of Afric, Conſtantine left him not to be judged by the biſhop of Rome, at that time Miltiades, but appointed the biſhops of Colen, Anthun, and Arles, to hear his cauſe; who not agreeing, he joined with them the ſaid Miltiades; and after that, upon an appeal from their order, the emperor heard and determined it himſelf, pronouncing the biſhop of Carthage innocent, and his adverſaries deſerving cenſure ‖.

The ſentiments of Arius, commonly called the Arian hereſy, (which we have before explained) began to prevail. Alexander, biſhop of Alexandria, oppoſed himſelf againſt him, and ſent epiſtles to all the churches, and among the reſt to Rome; but, without waiting for advice from them, excommunicated Arius. This kindling a great fire, Conſtantine was applied to, and the famous council of Nice was aſſembled by the immediate command or precept of Conſtantine; and by this and other inſtances it appears by whoſe authority councils were convened, at that time, and for ſome hundreds of years afterwards, but, if you aſk Bellarmine, he ſays only by the pope,

‡ See Chryſoſtom, l. i. Orat. xl. p. 485.
‖ Auguſtine's Epiſtles, clxii. and clxvi.

not

not by the emperor, unleſs his holineſs firſt approve of it §. And when this council were convened, obſerve their ſtile, viz. "We, here aſſembled by the grace of God and favour of Conſtantine our prince, beloved of God *". When this council was called by the ſole order of Conſtantine, he alſo ſat amongſt them as preſident; the biſhop of Rome was not there, but ſent two deputies, ſtiled preſbyters. But ſo far was he, by his deputies, chief there, that the firſt biſhop, who opened the matter and gave his opinion, was Euſtathius biſhop of Antioch; and in the ſixth canon of that council for ranking and ordering of biſhops in their places, no mention is made of the pre-eminence of Rome to any other city, but this general phraſe uſed, *That every church ſhall retain her due honour* †.

The number of biſhops in this council were 318, beſides vaſt numbers of preſbyters, deacons, acolothiſts, &c. Euſebius tells us, that ſome came to the council with worldly views of gain; and Theodoret, that others were ſubtle and crafty, and of a quarrelſome, malicious temper, which appeared immediately upon the opening of the council; for, notwithſtanding the emperor was preſent, who admoniſhed them to lay aſide all their differences, and to enter into meaſures of union and peace, they fell to groſs reflections on each other, and raiſed great diſturbances, inſomuch that he was obliged to interpoſe his authority, and with much perſuaſion ſilenced them.

When the emperor had brought them to ſome temper, they fell in good earneſt to creed-making, and drew up and ſubſcribed that which, from the place where they were aſſembled, was called the Nicene ‖.

By

§ Lib. i. de Conc. c. xii. See Hiſt. of Popery, vol. I. p. 25.

* Vid. Act. Concil. Nic. vol. i.

† Theodoret, lib. i. 7.

‖ This creed was compoſed at this firſt general council of Nice, A. D. 325, but it received many additions and alterations at the ſecond general council, at Conſtantinople, A. D. 381, and therefore might be more properly ſtiled the Conſtantinopolitan creed: and

By the accounts of the tranſactions in this aſſembly, given by Athanaſius himſelf in his letter to the African biſhops, it appears, that they were determined to inſert in the creed ſuch words as were moſt obnoxious to the Arians, and thus to force them to a public ſeparation from the church*: and when thoſe of the Arian party propoſed in writing to the ſynod the form of faith they had drawn up, the biſhops of the orthodox ſide no ſooner read it than they gravely tore it in pieces, and called it a ſpurious and falſe confeſſion, and after they had filled the place with noiſe and confuſion, univerſally accuſed them of betraying the doctrine according to godlineſs; and when the Arians would have conſented to forms of expreſſion that were general and leaſt exceptionable, the orthodox party would admit of no other phraſes than, *That the Son was conſubſtantial and of the ſame ſubſtance with the Father*; and notwithſtanding the Arians urged, that this expreſſion was unſcriptural, the orthodox would not admit of any alteration; and all the council ſubſcribed the creed, (except five biſhops, who, beſide other objections, were diſpleaſed with the word Conſubſtantial;) and the orthodox even proceeded ſo far as to cut off from communion all who would not agree to, and ſubſcribe this creed. In this public manner did the biſhops aſſert a dominion over the faith and conſciences of others, and aſſumed a power not only to dictate to them what they ſhould believe, but even to anathematize and expel from the Chriſtian church all who refuſed to ſubmit to their deciſions, and own their authority; for after they had

and as the Arian or orthodox party prevailed, this creed was cenſured or confirmed in ſome of the ſucceeding councils for ſeveral centuries. The third council of Toledo, which was held in the ſeventh century, held this creed in great veneration, as more largely condemning all hereſies than the apoſtles, and ordered that it ſhould be always recited by the people before the ſacrament, to ſhew that they are free from hereſy, and in ſtrict union with the Catholic church. This creed has been uſually read at the beginning of all the general councils ſince (*a*).

* Theod. E. H. l. I. c. viii.

(*a*) *Broughton's Article, Nicene creed.*

carried

carried their creed, they proceeded to excommunicate Arius, and his followers, and baniſhed Arius from Alexandria. They alſo condemned his book, called Thalia, which contained his explication of his own doctrine. After this they ſent letters to Alexandria, and to the brethren in Egypt, Lybia, and Pentapolis, to acquaint them with their decrees; and to inform them, that the holy ſynod had condemned the opinions of Arius, and exhort them to rejoice for the good deeds they had done, in cutting off all manner of hereſy. Conſtantine, after this, diſmiſſed the council, (not without ſome donations to gratify their avarice) recommended to them peace and harmony, and to avoid animoſity againſt ſuch as might excel, or be inferior to them: he likewiſe wrote to ſeveral churches, recommending and enjoining an univerſal conformity to the council's decrees, both in doctrine and ceremonies, uſing this, among other arguments, that what they had decreed was the will of God, and that the agreement of ſo great a number of biſhops was by inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt. But it is very natural to remark, after the anathemas and depoſitions agreed on by this council, which were the beginning of all the perſecutions that afterwards raged, with how little propriety the dignity of inſpiration was applied to them.

Many unhappy conſequences very ſoon took place; for when the Emperor's recommending to the churches a ſubmiſſion to their decrees was not effectual, more violent meaſures were made uſe of; for out of his great zeal to extinguiſh hereſy, he put forth public edicts againſt the authors and maintainers of it; againſt the Novatians, Valentinians, Marcionites, and others; ordained that the books written by any of them ſhould be burnt; and if any kept them in their poſſeſſion, or endeavoured to counteract his edict, they ſhould, on conviction thereof, ſuffer death.

Thus the orthodox firſt brought in the puniſhment of hereſy with death, and perſuaded the emperor to deſtroy thoſe whom they could not eaſily convert. The ſcriptures

ſcriptures were now no longer the rule and ſtandard of the Chriſtian faith; orthodoxy and hereſy were from henceforward to be determined by the deciſions of councils and fathers, and religion to be propagated no longer by the apoſtolic methods of perſuaſion, forbearance, and the virtues of an holy life, but by imperial edicts and decrees; and heretical gainſayers not to be convinced, that they may be brought to the acknowledgement of the truth and be ſaved, but to be perſecuted and deſtroyed. It is no wonder, that after this there ſhould be a continual fluctuation of the public faith, juſt as the prevailing parties had the imperial authority to ſupport them; or that we ſhould meet with little elſe in eccleſiaſtical hiſtory but violence and cruelties, committed by men, who had left the ſimplicity of the Chriſtian faith and profeſſion, enſlaved themſelves to ambition and avarice, and had before them the enſnaring views of temporal grandeur, high preferments, and large revenues.

If one reads the complaints of the orthodox writers againſt the Arians, one would think the Arians the moſt execrable ſet of men that ever lived: but Socrates tells us, this was the practice of the biſhops towards all they depoſed, to accuſe and pronounce them impious, but not to tell others the reaſons why they accuſed them as ſuch‡.

Soon after theſe tranſactions, Arius died; and the manner of his death, as it was reported by the orthodox, Athanaſius thinks of itſelf ſufficient, fully to condemn the Arian hereſy, and an evident proof that it was hateful to God. The Chriſtians, however, being bleſſed with Chriſtian emperors, were of opinion, that the divine providence had, in a ſignal manner, raiſed up and protected Conſtantine, for deſtroying the enemies of the church; but there is uſually much of raſhneſs and preſumption, in ſuppoſing the calamities of ſinners in this world are particular judgements of

‡ E. H. l. 1. c. xiv.

God.

God. Nor did Conſtantine himſelf long ſurvive him. He was ſucceeded by his three ſons, Conſtantine, Conſtantius, and Conſtans. Conſtantine, the eldeſt, recalled Athanaſius from baniſhment, and reſtored him to his biſhopric; upon which account there aroſe moſt grievous quarrels and ſeditions, many being killed, and ſeveral publicly whipped, by Athanaſius's order, according to the accuſations of his enemies. Conſtantius, after his elder brother's death, convened a ſynod at Antioch in Syria, where Athanaſius was again depoſed for theſe crimes, and Gregory put into the ſee of Alexandria. In this council a new creed was drawn up, in which the word *Conſubſtantial* was wholely omitted, and the expreſſions made uſe of ſo general, as that they might have been equally agreed to by the orthodox and Arians. In the cloſe of it ſeveral anathema's were added, and particularly upon all who ſhould teach, or preach, otherwiſe than what this council had received, becauſe, as they themſelves ſay, *They did really believe and follow all things delivered by the holy ſcriptures, both prophets and apoſtles.* So that now the whole Chriſtian world was under a ſynodical curſe, the oppoſite councils having damned one another, and all that differed from them; and if councils, as ſuch, have any authority to anathematize all who will not ſubmit to them, this authority equally belongs to every council; and therefore it was but a natural piece of revenge, that as the council of Nice had ſent all the Arians to the devil, the Arians, in their turn, ſhould take the orthodox along with them for company, and thus repay one anathema with another.

Conſtantius II. was warmly on the Arian ſide, and favoured the biſhops of that party only, and ejected Paul, the orthodox biſhop, from the ſee of Conſtantinople, as a perſon altogether unworthy of it. Macedonius being ſubſtituted in his room, who was in a different ſcheme, or at leaſt expreſſed himſelf in different words, both from the orthodox and Arians, aſſerting that the Son was not conſubſtantial, not of the ſame,

ſame, but of a like ſubſtance with the Father, and openly propogated this opinion after he had thruſt himſelf into the biſhopric of Paul; this the orthodox party highly reſented, and perſecuted thoſe who favoured that opinion.

The truth is, that the Chriſtian clergy were now become the chief incendiaries and diſturbers of the empire; and the pride of the biſhops, and the fury of the people on each ſide, were now grown to ſuch a height, as that there ſcarce ever was an election or reſtoration of a biſhop in the larger cities, but it was attended with ſlaughter and blood, as it is evident from the accounts given by the eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians of Athanaſius, Macedonius, and others, that they treated one another with the ſame implacable bitterneſs and ſeverity as ever their common enemies, the heathens, treated them, as though they thought that perſecution for conſcience ſake had been the diſtinguiſhing precept of the Chriſtian religion *.

This was the unhappy ſtate of the church in the reign of Conſtantius, which affords us little more than the hiſtory of councils and creeds differing from, and contrary to, each other; biſhops depoſing, cenſuring, and anathematiſing their adverſaries; and the Chriſtian people, divided into factions under their reſpective leaders, for the ſake of words they underſtood nothing of the ſenſe of, and ſtriving for victory, even unto bloodſhed and death.

This occaſioned much debate about the authority of councils and their liability to err in their deciſions. It was ſuggeſted, that in a council convened by a Chriſtian emperor, wherein ſome hundreds of prelates are aſſembled to deſide a theological diſpute, many are liable to be influenced by fear or dread of ſuperiors of greater juriſdiction, either of falling under their diſpleaſure of being reviled as heretics, or perhaps beggared and ruined by their refuſing to be influenced by ſome active and do-

* Doctor Chandler's Hiſt. of Perſecution, p. 36.

mineering

mineering ſpirits; by a deference to the majority; by a love of applauſe and reſpect; by vanity and ambition; by a total ignorance of the queſtion in diſpute, or a total indifference about it; by private friendſhip; by enmity and reſentment; by an indolent diſpoſition; by an averſion to diſputes, or love of peace and quietneſs, &c. which whoever conſiders will be ready to conclude, there is no great deference to be paid to the authority of councils. Even the authority of councils themſelves were zealouſly aſſerted by the council of Conſtance and Baſil, and condemned by the Lateran; nevertheleſs the diſpute turned in favour of councils, and it was in general deemed heretical to ſpeak againſt their authority. They who diſclaim private judgement, and believe the infallibility of the church, act conſiſtently in holding the infallibility of councils; but they who take their faith from the ſcriptures, and not from the church, ſhould be careful not to require nor to yield too much regard to ſuch aſſemblies *.

We have a rule, by which we may with ſafety, and with ſatisfaction, judge of their authority; a rule given us by our Maſter, *By their fruits ye ſhall know them.* We need only ſurvey their acts and monuments, their behaviour, doctrines, decrees, and cenſures, and compare them impartially with the morality, the ſimplicity, the prudence, the charity of the goſpel; and by this we may judge of the authority of councils and fathers.

The forming of creeds or ſummary accounts of the Chriſtian faith, till this century, were but few, and thoſe conciſe, expreſſive only of the principal articles, and thoſe not impoſed on the churches; but in proceſs of time, when the empire became Chriſtian, and the deciſions of aſſembled biſhops were made under the influence of the court, and then enforced by the ſecular arm, the creeds they drew up were no longer mere accounts of the principal doctrines for preſerving a unity of faith, &c. but obtained the nature of decrees and

* Jortin's Remark on Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. iii. p. 55.

laws,

laws, henceforth precluding all private judgement, and under one ſhape or other binding the main body of the clergy, if not the whole Chriſtian world. And indeed, what St. Gregory Nazianzen thought of the councils held in his time, that is to ſay, in the latter half of the fourth century, appears ſufficiently from his letter to Procopius—that he never ſaw a good ending of any ſynod—the ſpirit of contention, or the ſpirit of ambition, and love of rule, ſtill gaining the aſcendancy over reaſon: nor does he except that council to which we are ſo far indebted for the Nicene creed, and at which he himſelf, to his ſorrow, was preſent. They fall, ſaith he, into factions, and fight for the ſake of thrones, i. e. of epiſcopal fees, and divide the whole world in a lawleſs or irreligious manner *.

In the beginning of Julian's reign, A. D. 361. he behaved himſelf with great moderation towards the Chriſtians; yet his hatred to them ſoon afterwards appeared ſo, that they were not permitted the education of their children, nor to be inſtructed in the Grecian language and learning. He taxed them very heavily, and exacted fines from ſuch as would not ſacrifice; and when the governors of the provinces took occaſion, from thence, to increaſe the oppreſſion, inſomuch that perſons of all ranks could not but complain of their cruelty, Julian anſwered, with a ſneer, Your God hath commanded you to ſuffer perſecution. And one of the reaſons aſſigned for his ſeverity was, that the Chriſtian biſhops ſhewed ſuch a turbulent ſpirit, that he was obliged to have a jealous eye over them, and bear a ſtrict hand toward them. But the effects of his averſion to the Chriſtians did not laſt long, for he was killed in the Perſian wars, and reigned ſcarce two years.

Jovian ſucceeded him, who was a Chriſtian both by principle and profeſſion. But the biſhops were ſoon for tampering with him: Athanaſius writes to him in favour of the Nicene creed, and endeavoured to prevail

* Greg. Naz. Epiſt. ad Procop.

upon

upon him to perſecute the Arians. A ſynod alſo of certain biſhops met at Antioch, who, though they had before oppoſed the Nicene doctrine, finding that Jovian favoured it, with great obſequiouſneſs readily ſubſcribed it, and in a very complaiſant letter repreſented that this true orthodox faith was the center of unity, while the followers of Macedonius, who rejected the word Conſubſtantial, ſought to recommend themſelves to his favour by the beſt repreſentation they could give of their tenets. Jovian, who ſaw through the craft of thoſe temporiſing biſhops, anſwers, "I hate contention, and love thoſe that ſtudy for peace;" declaring, he would trouble none on account of their faith, but would favour and eſteem thoſe who contributed to reſtore and preſerve peace in the church. Themiſtius, the philoſopher, very juſtly commended him on that account, and for deſpiſing the inſinuations of thoſe who would have perſuaded him to violent methods in favour of a party, concerning whom, he ſaid, they worſhipped not God, but the purple *.

Valentinian and Valens, who ſucceeded him, embraced different parties in religion: the former, of the orthodox ſide, the latter, of the Arians. However, they both declared for liberty; but Valens ſoon ſuffered himſelf to be prevailed upon, by Eudoxus, biſhop of Conſtantinople, to forſake both his opinion and his moderation. They obtained leave from him to hold a ſynod at Lampſacus, where the orthodox carried their point, and depoſed all the biſhops of the Arian party †. This was ſo contrary to the moderation of Valens, that he was highly exaſperated, who thereupon called a council of Arian biſhops, and commanded thoſe, who formed the council of Lampſacus, to embrace the opinions of Eudoxus the Arian, and upon their refuſal ſent them into baniſhment, and gave their churches to their enemies, ſparing only Paulinus for the remarkable ſanctity

* Theod. lib. iv. c. iv.
† Sozimus, lib. vi. c. vii.

of his life. After this he entered into more violent meaſures, which the Arian biſhops were acceſſary to.

In the mean time great diſturbances happened at Rome upon Liberius's dying, who was biſhop of that city. Urſinus, a Dean of that church, and Damaſus, were nominated to ſucceed him; the party of Damaſus prevailed, and got him choſen and ordained: Urſinus being enraged at it ſet up a ſeparate meeting, got himſelf ordained by ſome other biſhops; and this occaſioned great diſputes among the citizens for the epiſcopal dignity, and the matter was carried to ſuch a height, that great numbers were murdered in the quarrel on both ſides, no leſs than 137 perſons being deſtroyed in the church itſelf, according to Ammianus *, who adds, "That it was no wonder to ſee thoſe, who were ambitious of human greatneſs, contending with ſo much heat and animoſity for that, becauſe, when they had obtained it, they were ſure to be enriched by the offerings of the matrons; of appearing abroad in great ſplendor; of being admired for their coſtly coaches; ſumptuous in their feaſts, outdoing ſovereign princes in the expences of their tables, &c." This is ſaid to be the firſt quarrel for the ſee of Rome, A. D. 366.

Gratian, who ſucceeded Valens, was of the orthodox party, and recalled thoſe biſhops he had baniſhed, and particularly favoured and promoted the orthodox faith.

Theodoſius, who ſucceeded him, was a zealous abettor of the orthodox party, and wrote a letter from Theſſalonica to Conſtantinople, wherein he tells them that it was his pleaſure that all his ſubjects ſhould worſhip the Trinity as equal in divine honour: and where he could not perſuade, he endeavoured to compel the biſhops to aſſent to, and declare their faith in the Nicene creed, under the threats of expulſion frem their churches: and the more effectually to extinguiſh the hereſy, he ſummoned a council of biſhops, in A. D. 383, to confirm that creed, and alſo made an addition to it, viz.

* Lib. xxvii. c. iii.

after

after the words Holy Ghoſt they inſerted, *The Lord the quickner proceeding from the Father, whom with the Father and the Son we worſhip and glorify, and who ſpake by the Prophets* †.

The laws againſt heretics, collected in the Theodoſian code, ſtand as a ſhameful monument of the perſecuting Anti-chriſtian ſpirit, which broke out in this century, and grew more and more violent in the following times, the Chriſtians themſelves imitating the cruelties of the Pagans *.

Arcadius and Honorius, who were the ſons and ſucceſſors of Theodoſius, embraced the orthodox religion and party, and confirmed the decrees of the former emperor. Chryſoſtom, who was biſhop of Conſtantinople, perſecuted the Arians. The Donatiſts in Africa perſecuted the orthodox, and thus perſecution ſeemed to know no end.

Thus we find the Arian doctrine was alternately (according to the diſpoſition of the court) approved and condemned by many different councils. In this century, in the council of Alexandria, in the year 322, Arian and his followers were excommunicated in the council of Bythinia; two years afterwards they were declared orthodox; two years afterwards condemned and anathematized in the council of Nice; and in the year 359 their ſentiments were again approved and juſtified in the council of Seleucia; and about 400 Weſtern biſhops in the council of Rimini, who firſt, indeed, condemned the Arians with great rigour, afterwards, in contradiction to their own former judgement, ſubſcribed the Arian confeſſion of faith ‖.

The doctrine of an abſolute unconditional predeſtination of all events prevailed much in the Eaſtern church. Some authors conceive it was much more primitive, and would fain make it to commence from the apoſto-

† An abſtract from Dr. Chandler's Hiſtory of Perſecution.
* Jortin's Remarks on Eccleſ. Hiſt. p. 245.
‖ Gale's Sermons, vol. i. p. 71t

lic age; but as it is inconſiſtent with the principal doctrines of the Romiſh church, we think there is not ſufficient authority to charge them with it. The reader may ſee the arguments in ſupport of it *.

Many ſuperſtitious cuſtoms debaſed the purity of the Chriſtian church in this century.—The making croſſes of wood, metal, and in painting, were brought in by the emperor Conſtantine, who cauſed a croſs to be made and diſplayed as his imperial banner, and from thence it became a faſhionable ornament in a houſe, a token of loyalty, and of the orthodox or true catholic church †. —Pilgrimages and viſits paid under pretences of devotion to certain places called holy, ſuch as the temple at Jeruſalem and the Viaticum at Rome, took place in this century, but they did not carry it to ſuch height as to imagine there was any real merit in it, as appears from the confeſſion of St. Jerom —Giving the euchariſt to children became a cuſtom about the cloſe of this century in the Bohemian and other Weſtern churches, and did ſoon after prevail in the Eaſtern or Greek churches. The cuſtom of baptizing infants had been founded on the interpretation of John iii. 3, 5, and this practice of giving the ſacrament to children was founded on an explication of John vi. 53. Thus were *baptiſm* and the *ſacrament* thought indiſpenſible to ſalvation: the practice of giving the euchariſt continued in the Weſtern churches till the eleventh or twelfth century, when it was laid aſide upon the new doctrine of tranſubſtantiation: and in many of the Greek churches the euchariſt is ſtill given to children ‡. But, on the other hand, ſome were of opinion, that to defer baptiſm, till there was an apparent danger of death, was moſt ſafe, under an apprehenſion that ſins, committed after baptiſm, would ſcarcely be forgiven.

* In Calvin's Inſtitutes, or in Dr. Gill's Cauſe of God and Truth, vol. iii. latter end.

† Chamier, tom. ii. lib. ii. cap. iv.

‡ See Wall's Hiſt. and Peirce's Eſſay on giving the Euchariſt to Children, p. 6. and Æneas Sylvius's Epiſtle, cxxx.

The

The tenth perſecution of the Chriſtians began at Nicomedia, Feb. 13, 303, and continued for ten years, ending June 13, 313, by an edict of Conſtantine and Licenius *.

CENTURY THE FIFTH.

In the fifth century we find the church of Rome made very conſiderable efforts to enlarge her power. Till about the year 432 the hiſtory of the popes was merely eccleſiaſtical, but from hence the affairs of the church were ſo interwoven with thoſe of the ſtate, that their hiſtory is both eccleſiaſtical and civil. The popes ſoon made a different figure from that which they had hitherto made: no longer mere biſhops, but biſhops and princes, and the biſhop almoſt entirely loſt in the prince; no longer contending only with their collegues for ſpiritual power and juriſdiction, but at the ſame time with the greateſt monarchs for dominion; nay, employing the ſword as well as the keys, and heading, as directed by their ambition or intereſt, both councils and armies †.

However, it is not only true that the patriarchs were hitherto looked upon or conſidered as equal; that the biſhop of Rome held the other biſhops to be his brethren and collegues; but the name and idea of an univerſal biſhop was deemed a contradiction and a mark of Anti-chriſt ‡.

Infallibility was not yet aſſumed as the prerogative of the pope; and if it had, one would think ſeveral remarkable occurrences and facts in this century might be ſufficient to convince the moſt prejudiced in favour of papal power, of its abſurdity.

Innocent, who was biſhop of Rome, 402, grievouſly perſecuted the Novatians, and, as Socrates obſerves ‖,

* Blair.
† Bower's Hiſt. of the Pope's, vol. i. p. 411.
‡ Walch's Hiſt. of the Popes.
‖ Lib. vii. c. ix.

was the firſt biſhop of that ſee, who diſturbed them. —Celeſtine, one of his ſucceſſors, imitated his injuſtice, and deprived the Novatians of the remainder of their churches, and not content with depriving them of their churches, prevented their private aſſembling, and even plundered them of all their ſubſtance.—Neſtorius, biſhop of Conſtantinople, ſhewed himſelf a violent perſecutor ſoon after his election: addreſſing himſelf to the emperor before the whole congregation, he ſaid, *Purge me, O emperor, the earth from heretics, and I will give thee the kingdom of heaven; conquer with me the heretics, and I will conquer with thee the Perſians*; and agreeable to his declaration, in five days after his conſecration, attempted to ſet fire to the church of the Arians when they were aſſembled in it for prayer.*—Few of the biſhops were free from this wicked ſpirit. Socrates, indeed, excepts Atticus, biſhop of Conſtantinople, who behaved much more mildly and gently; and Proclus alſo, who was brought up under Atticus, who was gentle towards all men, from a perſuaſion, that this was a much more proper method than violence to reduce heretics to the true faith: and in this he imitated Theodoſius the emperor, ſometimes called Theodoſius II. who was not at all diſpleaſed that any ſhould differ from him in ſentiments. But under the reign of this emperor the Arians alſo, in their turn, uſed the orthodox with no greater moderation, burnt churches, put orthodox biſhops to death, ſeized their books, and committed a variety of outrages for ſuppreſſion of the orthodox faith †.

During theſe tranſactions, Neſtorius the perſecuted biſhop of Conſtantinople, though tolerably ſound in the doctrine of the real Deity of the Logos, yet excepted againſt the Virgin Mary being called the Mother of God. This occaſioned a council to be convened at Epheſus, A. D. 434, of which Cyril was preſident,

* Abſtract from Dr. Chandler's Hiſt. of Perſecution, p. 44.
† Socrates, ch. ii. p. 41.

and, as he hated Neſtorius, he perſuaded the biſhops of his party to decree, that the Virgin was, and ſhould be the Mother, and to anathematize all who ſhould not confeſs her in this character.

Marcian, the ſucceſſor of Theodoſius in the empire, embraced the orthodox party and opinions, and was very deſirous to bring about an entire uniformity in the worſhip of God. Agreeably to this his temper, Euſebius, biſhop of Nicomedia, addreſſed him, ſoon after his promotion, in theſe words; *God hath juſtly given you the empire that you ſhould govern all for the univerſal welfare, and for the peace of his holy church.* The legates of Leo, biſhop of Rome, preſented him their accuſations againſt Dioſcorus, as did alſo Euſebius, beſeeching the emperor that what he had advanced might be judged of, and determined by a ſynod. Marcian conſented, and ordered the biſhops to meet firſt at Nice, and afterwards at Chalcedon. This was the fourth general council, A. D. 454, conſiſting of near 600 prelates: the principal cauſe of their aſſembling was the Eutychian hereſy, viz. That *Jeſus Chriſt conſiſted of two natures before his incarnation, but that after this he had one nature only: he alſo denied that the body of Chriſt was of the ſame ſubſtance with ours.* This council condemned his opinions as heretical, and expelled him from the biſhopric of Alexandria, and proceeded to ſettle the faith according to the Nicene creed, the opinions of the fathers, and the doctrine of Athanaſius, Cyril, Celeſtine, Hilarius, Baſil, Gregory, and Leo; and decreed that Chriſt was truly God and truly man, conſubſtantial to the Father as to his deity, and conſubſtantial to us as to his humanity; and that it ſhould not be lawful for any perſons to utter or write, or compoſe, or think, or teach, any other faith whatſoever.

Leo ſucceeded Marcian, and zealouſly endeavoured to promote the orthodox faith.—But, under Zeno, the ſon-in-law and ſucceſſor to Leo, notwithſtanding his uniting and pacifying edict, great differences aroſe, and perſecutions were commenced againſt the orthodox.

Anaſtaſius, who ſucceeded Zeno, was himſelf a great lover of peace, and endeavoured to promote it both amongſt the clergy and laity, and therefore ordered that there ſhould be no innovation in the church whatſoever. But this moderation was by no means pleaſing to the monks and biſhops: ſome of them were great ſticklers for the council of Chalcedon, and would not allow a ſingle word of their decrees to be altered, nor communicate with thoſe who did not receive them: others were ſo far from ſubmitting to this ſynod, that they anathematized it; whilſt others adhered to the pacific edict, and maintained peace with one another, even though they were of different judgement concerning the nature of Chriſt. Hence the church was divided into factions, ſo that the biſhops would not communicate with each other: not only the Eaſtern biſhops ſeparated from the Weſtern, but thoſe of the ſame province had ſchiſms among themſelves. The emperor, to prevent as much as poſſible theſe quarrels, baniſhed thoſe who were moſt remarkably troubleſome from their ſees: but the monks and biſhops fruſtrated all his attempts for peace, by forcing one another to make new confeſſions and ſubſcriptions, and by anathematizing all who differed from them, as heretics: they alſo treated the emperor himſelf with great inſolence, and excommunicated him as an enemy to the ſynod of Chalcedon *.

The Athanaſian creed, as it is called, we ſhall juſt mention in this place, as the conſubſtantial doctrine, that is to ſay, that the ſubſtance or eſſence of the Son and Spirit were the ſame in kind, or rather ſpecies, with that of God the Father, ſo generaly prevailed about this time; though the creed now called Athanaſian had not then acquired that name, but was ſimply ſtiled the Catholic faith, and did not conſiſt of the ſame articles as at preſent †.

Under

* An abſtract from Dr. Chandler's Hiſt. of Perſecution, p. 51.

† Voſſius and other learned writers have ſufficiently proved that it was none of his;—that it was originally a Latin compoſition, and

Under the emperor Anaſtaſius, Symmachus, biſhop of Rome, expelled the Manichees from the city, and ordered their books to be publicly burnt before the doors of the church; and other perſecutions were practiſed againſt them.

The Pelagian hereſy (as it was called) ſprung up in this century, and made no ſmall progreſs; it conſiſted principally in aſſerting the abſolute freedom of the human will; which occaſioned a council to be held at Carthage in 412 and 417, and at Mileva and at Rome in 416.

Platina tells us, that amongſt many other ceremonies introduced by pope Sixtus III. in this century, they beautified and adorned the churches, and placed upon the altar of St. Peter a golden image of our Saviour, enriched with jewels.

The prohibiting prieſts to marry, was inſtituted by pope Innocent, A. D. 410.

and by a Latin author;—that it cannot be carried higher than the very cloſe of the ſixth century. Many writers of credit, eſpecially Paſcaſius Queſnel, an eminent French divine, aſcribe it to Virgilius Tapſenſis in this century, who was famous for his forging many books under the names of the fathers. Dupin favours this ſuppoſition, and ſays all the world knows it was not Athanaſius's (*a*). Biſhop Burnet, in his Expoſition of the Thirty-nine Articles, p. 107, ſays, as it was none of his, ſo it was never eſtabliſhed by any general council till 1123. Dr. Scott ſays, ſome part of it is inconſiſtent with the moſt genuine writings of Athanaſius. Dr. Cudworth ſays, as this creed aſſerts the three perſons not ſpecifically, but numerically the ſame, it ſeems not to be owned by any public authority, ſave that of the Lateran council in 1123. Dr. Waterland, in his Critical Hiſtory of this creed, attributes the compoſing of it to Hillary, biſhop of Arles; and that before A. D. 670, the name of Athanaſius was not given to it.—As to the reception of this creed, it was received in France in the time of Hincmar, A. D. 850,—at Spain about A. D. 950, and in Germany much about the ſame time—in England likewiſe in the tenth century—at Verona, in Italy, 1014; and as to the Greek and Oriental churches, it is not certain that any of them ever received it (*b*).

The hiſtory of Czar Peter the Great mentions, it was introduced into ſome of the churches of Ruſſia the laſt century, as a novelty picked up in his travels to France.

(*a*) *Dupin's Eccleſ. Hiſt. tom. II. p.* 34.
(*b*) *See Athanaſian Forgeries.*

And

And the baptizing with ſureties, or godfathers and godmothers, became a cuſtom in this century *.

The ſign of the croſs in baptiſm was likewiſe introduced into the church of Rome, the beginning of this century.

Giving the euchariſt to children, introduced at the cloſe of the laſt, was a matter of diſpute all this century: it occaſioned the firſt council at Toledo, 438, who left the matter undetermined: the ſecond council, held in 675, determined in favour of it, and attempted to explain what had been before ambiguouſly delivered concerning it †.

Chriſtianity was propagated in Scotland the latter end of this century, by the direction of pope Celeſtine 415 §.

CENTURY THE SIXTH.

In the ſixth century, the church never conſidered the pope as head of all the churches in the world: he was a patriarch, and had the chief place among his brethren, becauſe he reſided at Rome; and hitherto they ſeemed to deſire no more; and though he arrogated to himſelf that pre-eminence, he was ingenuous enough to acknowledge, that the privilege was of human origin: and they were not wanting to preſerve this authority among the people by a pomp and ſplendor, as indecent as the arogant ſtyle, which ſome of them affected ‖.

The infallibility of the pope of Rome was unknown as yet, amidſt the enormities, errors, and contradictions, of ſeveral of them: it would, indeed, have been a ridiculous inconſiſtency, to give oracular authority to the ſentences of ſuch men.

The ſuperiority of councils to the pope was therefore a point hitherto not diſputed: the popes themſelves de-

* Madg. cent. 5, ch. iv. p. 656, quoted by Delaune.

† Pierce's, Eſſay, p. 9.

§ Camden.

‖ St. Jerom records a memorable ſaying of Pretextatus, a pagan, at this time: "Make me a biſhop of Rome, and I will immediately become a Chriſtian."

fired

ſired ſuch aſſemblies, and declared, that ſo far from having a power of altering their decrees, that on the contrary, their own opinions and doctrines were to be ſubjected to the examination of councils. It was, indeed, a rule, that the biſhop obtained his office by election; but the corruption of the times was ſuch, that money had frequently a great ſhare in it. The biſhop was then ſubject to the civil magiſtrates of Rome, and acknowledged, as his ſovereign, the emperor of Rome, and afterwards the kings of Italy. It alſo appears from the canon law, that the uſages of the Roman church, and the letters and epiſtles of the popes, gradually acquired the authority of laws §.

Very early in this century, the notion of the popes independency on councils was firſt broached: the occaſion of which was, that ſome crimes were laid to the charge of Symmachus, then biſhop of Rome. His friends in the council pretended, "*That no aſſembly of biſhops had a power to judge the pope, and that he was accountable for his actions to God alone*," which was unanſwerably confuted as ſoon as broached. One of the council immediately obſerved, they were convened for that purpoſe, and he was for that end ſummoned to appear before them.

Juſtin, who aſcended the imperial throne, A. D. 518, revived the perſecutions, as a mark of his greater zeal for orthodoxy than his predeceſſor: Anaſtaſius Severus, biſhop of Antioch, being warm againſt the council of Chalcedon, the emperor ordered his tongue to be cut out. Platina alſo tells us, that he baniſhed the Arians, and gave their churches to the orthodox. Hormiſda alſo, biſhop of Rome, after the example of Symmachus, baniſhed the remainder of the Manichees, and cauſed their writings to be burnt.

Juſtinian, his ſucceſſor, ſucceeded him alſo in his zeal for the council of Chalcedon, and baniſhed the biſhops of Conſtantinople and Antioch, becauſe they would not obey his orders.—He publiſhed a law, that there ſhould

§ Walch's Hiſtory of the Popes.

be

be no pagan or heretic in his empire, allowing three months only for their converſion: by another, he rendered them incapable of being witneſſes in any trial againſt Chriſtians: he likewiſe prohibited the tranſcribing any heretical book, upon the puniſhment of loſing both their hands. Theſe laws were principally enacted at the inſtigation of the orthodox biſhops. Thus Agapetus, biſhop of Rome, who had condemned Anthimus, and depoſed him from his ſee of Conſtantinople, perſuaded Juſtinian to baniſh all thoſe whom he had condemned for hereſy. But notwithſtanding all his zeal for orthodoxy, and the cruel edicts he publiſhed for the extirpation of hereſy, he was infamouſly covetous; ſold the provinces of the empire to plunderers and oppreſſors, ſtripped the wealthy of their eſtates upon falſe accuſations. Evagrius * likewiſe charges him with a variety of other unheard-of cruelties, and unnatural vices.

During the reign of Juſtinian, in the 24th year of it, was held the fifth general council at Conſtantinople, A. D. 553, conſiſting of about 165 fathers. The occaſion of their meeting was the oppoſition that was made to the four former general councils, and particularly the writings of Origen, which Euſtochius, biſhop of Jeruſalem, accuſed, as full of many dangerous errors. In the firſt ſeſſions it was debated, whether *thoſe, who were dead, were to be anathematized?* One Eutychius looked with contempt on the fathers for their heſitation in ſo plain a matter, and told them, that there needed no deliberation about it; for that king Joſias formerly did not only deſtroy the idolatrous prieſts who were living, but dug alſo thoſe, who had been dead long before, out of their graves. So clear a determination of the point, who could reſiſt? The fathers were immediately convinced, and Juſtinian cauſed him to be conſecrated biſhop of Conſtantinople, in the room of Menas, juſt deceaſed, for this his ſkill in ſcripture and caſuiſtry. The conſequence was, that the decrees of the four preceding

* Evagrius, lib. iv. ch. xxxii. Platina. Dr. Chandler's Hiſtory of Perſecution, p. 52.

councils were all confirmed; thoſe who were condemned by them, re-condemned and anathematized; particularly Theodorus, biſhop of Mopſueſtia, and Ibas, with their writings, as favouring the impieties of Neſtorius; and finally, Origen, with all his deteſtable and execrable principles, and all perſons whatſoever, who ſhould think or ſpeak of them, or dare to defend them. After theſe tranſactions the ſynod ſent an account of them to Juſtinian, whom they complimented with the title of *the Moſt Chriſtian King, and with having a ſoul partaker of the heavenly nobility*; and yet ſoon after theſe flatteries, his moſt chriſtian majeſty turned heretick himſelf, and endeavoured, with as much zeal, to propagate hereſy, as he had done orthodoxy before: he publiſhed an edict, by which he ordained, That *the body of Chriſt was incorruptible, and incapable even of natural and innocent paſſions; that before his death he eat in the ſame manner as he did after his reſurrection, receiving no converſion or change from his very formation in the womb, neither in his voluntary or natural affections, nor after his reſurrection.* But as he was endeavouring to force the biſhops to receive his creed, God was pleaſed, as Evagrius obſerves, to cut him off.

But after the year 560, the biſhops being become the abſolute diſpenſers of the fourth part of the goods of the church, they began to employ more of their care in their temporal affairs, and to make parties in the cities; ſo that elections were no longer carried on with a view to the ſervice of God, but managed by faction and intrigues, which often proceeded to open violence. This gave the firſt alarm to princes, who had hitherto little concerned themſelves in the choice of the miniſtry. Moved, therefore, partly by religious conſiderations, and partly by reaſons of ſtate, they now began not to ſuffer the clergy and people to determine elections by themſelves, and according to their own paſſions: for ſeeing men no longer avoiding and flying from biſhoprics, but even making intereſt for them by all the courtſhip and ſkilful ſollicitations they could uſe, ſo

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great a conteſt opened the way to ſeditions. Theſe proceedings produced an edict, that no perſon elected ſhould be conſecrated without the approbation of the prince, reſerving to themſelves the right of confirming the great biſhoprics, ſuch as thoſe in Italy, of Rome, Ravenna, and Milan. In this manner, that is, with the imperial ſanction, the popes and biſhops continued to be choſen. Through all the hiſtory of Gregory of Tours, from the time of Clowis, the firſt Chriſtian king of France, until the year 590, we find no inſtance of any one biſhop being made in any other manner, than by the nomination or conſent of the king. It was eaſy for thoſe biſhops, when once they were made without the authority of the people, to exclude the people alſo from the choice of prieſts and deacons, and other eccleſiaſtical miniſters, and to transfer that right to the emperor or prince alone: and thus the ſucceſſion of biſhops and clergy became greatly irregular; and, inſtead of being choſen and ſet apart to their reſpective offices by the people, whom they were appointed to watch over and miniſter unto, according to reaſon and ancient uſage, they were ſet apart by thoſe inveſted with civil power.

And notwithſtanding this order and method was broke through in after-times by arbitrary meaſures, it appears that, ſo late as the year 590, the pope was not deemed lawful pope till his election was confirmed by the emperor: hence Gregory the Great, being choſen by a great majority, but deſirous to decline that dignity, wrote to the emperor Mauritius, intreating him to refuſe his conſent, that the electors might thereby be obliged to chuſe another. The perſon choſen was alſo ſtiled Elect, not Biſhop, and yielded the firſt place in the church to the arch prieſt *.

Under Mauritius, John, biſhop of Conſtantinople, in a council held in that city, ſtiled himſelf Oecumenical Biſhop, by the conſent of the fathers there aſſembled;

* Bower's Hiſtory of the Popes, vol. II. p. 265.

and

and the emperor himſelf ordered Gregory to acknowledge him in that character. Gregory abſolutely refuſed it, and replied, that the power of binding and looſing was delivered to Peter and his ſucceſſors, and not to the biſhops of Conſtantinople; admoniſhing him to take care, that he did not provoke the anger of God againſt himſelf, by raiſing tumults in his church. This pope was the firſt who ſtiled himſelf, *Servus Servorum Dei*, Servant of the Servants of God; and had ſuch an abhorrence of the title of Univerſal Biſhop, that he ſaid, "I confidently affirm, than whoſoever calls himſelf Univerſal Prieſt, is the fore-runner of Antichriſt, by thus proudly exalting himſelf above others."

But however modeſt Gregory was in refuſing and condemning this arrogant title, Boniface III. thought better of the matter; and, after great ſtruggles, prevailed with Phocas, who murdered Mauritius, the emperor, to declare, that the ſee of the bleſſed apoſtle Peter, which is the head of all churches, ſhould be ſo called and accounted by all, and the biſhop of it Oecumenical or Univerſal Biſhop. The church of Conſtantinople had claimed this precedence and dignity, and was ſometimes favoured herein by the emperors, who declared, that the firſt ſee ought to be in that place which was the head of the empire. The Roman pontiffs, on the other hand, affirmed that Rome, of which Conſtantinople was but a colony, ought to be eſteemed the head of the empire; becauſe the Greeks themſelves, in their writings, ſtile the emperor, Roman Emperor, and the inhabitants of Conſtantinople are called Romans, and not Greeks; not to mention that Peter, the prince of the apoſtles, gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven to his ſucceſſors, the popes of Rome. On this foundation was the ſuperiority of the church of Rome, to that of all other churches, built: and Phocas, who was guilty of all villainies, was one of the fitteſt perſons that could be found to gratify Boniface in this requeſt. Boniface alſo called a council

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at Rome, where this ſupremacy was confirmed, and by whom it was decreed, that biſhops ſhould be choſen by the clergy and people, approved by the prince of the city, and ratified by the pope with theſe words, *volumus et jubemus*, for this is our will and command. To reward Phocas for the grant of the primacy, he approved the murder of Mauritius, and very honourably received his images, which he ſent to Rome; and, having thus wickedly poſſeſſed themſelves of this unrighteous power, the popes as wickedly uſed it, ſoon brought almoſt the whole Chriſtian world into ſubjection to them, and became the perſecutors general of the church of God, proceeding from one uſurpation to another, till at laſt they brought emperors, kings, and princes, into ſubjection, forcing them to ratify their unjuſt decrees, and to puniſh, in the ſevereſt manner, all that ſhould preſume to oppoſe and contradict them, till ſhe became *drunken with the blood of the ſaints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jeſus; Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth* †. Pretty early in this century perſecutions recommenced at Rome againſt the Manichees.

The cuſtom of anathematizing perſons after death was introduced from apreſumption, that all thoſe whom they anathematized, and condemned as heretics, their ſentence would be confirmed by the Supreme Being; but others more modeſtly pleaded only for its being their duty to ſhew their diſapprobation of heretics, as well dead as living.

This was one part of the conteſt called the Three Chapters, which occaſioned the meeting of ſeveral councils in this century. The ſecond was concerning the writings of Theodoret againſt Cyril; and the third was concerning the letter of Ibas to the pope, whether orthodox or not *.

The dignity of the clergy of all ranks was a point much inſiſted on. Pope Felix, A. D. 528, aſſerted,

† Chandler's Hiſtory of Perſecution, p. 55.
* Bower's Hiſtory of the Popes, vol. II. p. 401.

that

that the clergy were by divine right exempted from the power of the civil magiſtrate, and their miſconduct only cognizable by, and liable to, the cenſure of the church, and the ſynods of each dioceſe and province §.

It likewiſe became a diſpute, whether a pope, who is not true (that is, rightly elected and conſtituted) can be infallible. This was occaſioned by two popes being choſen at the ſame time, viz. Boniface II. and Dioſcorus, A. D. 530; but the great quarrel was terminated by the death of Dioſcorus ‖.

Praying to the virgin Mary was received as a laudable practice by the Romiſh church, and many attributes aſcribed to her ‡.

Purgatory was a device of St. Auſtin's in this century; but he both ſaid and unſaid it, and at laſt, like a wiſe ſchoolman, left it doubtful. The papiſts were greatly divided about it; and it is more properly ſaid to be a new doctrine ſtarted by him, than received as an article of faith in the Romiſh church in this century.

Praying for the dead was a practice that prevailed at the latter end of this century: a novelty of pope Gregory I. who likewiſe introduced the proceſſion of the hoſt, A. D. 592. Indulgences were alſo granted by him in the year 600, but not in the manner or for the purpoſes as they were ſoon after, and now in general, underſtood, being then occaſionally granted to Chriſtians, when they had fallen into any heinous crime, either in denying their faith, or ſacrificing to idols, through the fear of, or actual ſuffering, perſecution; and for which, being enjoined a long penance, the pope had power to mitigate, which power of mitigation was called indulgence †.

The author of the Hiſtory of Popery ‖, ſpeaking of the progreſs of popiſh doctrines and ceremonies, ſays,

§ Bower's Hiſtory of the Popes, vol. II. p. 325.

‖ Ibid. 327.

‡ Hiſt. Popery, vol. I. p. 87. See alſo The Bleſſed Virgin's Pſalter, as it is called, compoſed by Bonaventure, a cardinal of the Romiſh church.

† Dupin.

‖ In two vol. 4to. printed in 1735, vol. I. p. 134.

" that hitherto papal indulgences, as now underſtood, were not ſo much as heard of—purgatory fire was unkindled—their maſs was yet unmoulded—tranſubſtantiation unthought of—the doctrine of merits untaught—the cup in the ſacrament not denied to the laity; and not till long after that prayers were made with the people in an unknown tongue: but from hence we behold the church in her declining ſtate; knowledge decayed, ſuperſtition uſurped the place of zeal, and both princes and prelates were more buſied in ornamenting churches, or building nunneries, &c. than in raiſing up living ſtones, and edifying God's ſpiritual temple."

CENTURY THE SEVENTH.

In this century we meet with many remarkable occurrences.—At the beginning of it, Mellitus, the firſt biſhop of London, in conſequence of the high dignity to which he was advanced, went to Rome, as Bede informs us, to conſult with the pope concerning the affairs of the Engliſh church; on which occaſion Boniface called a council of the Italian biſhops, at which the biſhop of London attended or aſſiſted, and when it broke up, returned to London with the decrees of that court.

Pope Boniface ſhewed no ſmall zeal in propagating the Chriſtian religion in Great Britain; but, at the ſame time, he took care to introduce an undue veneration for the papal robes, for the authority and dignity of the ſovereign pontiff, and for a variety of ceremonies which defaced the ſimplicity of the goſpel. This pope's pall was firſt ſent into England to Juſtus, who, in the year 624, ſucceeded Mellitus in the ſee of Canterbury; and the number of biſhops were greatly increaſed, as well as of inferior clergy, who received their ordination from the biſhop of Canterbury, by virtue of that great dignity which had been delegated to him by the pope.

Another point aimed at was, to increaſe a veneration for the clergy, inſomuch that pretty early in this century

tury the clergy acquired a very great aſcendancy over the people, and they voluntarily imparted a conſiderable ſhare of their worldly ſubſtance, eſpecially in ſome of the capital cities, as well as Rome, which in each city made one capital ſtock; and this was not divided between them and the poor, but was appropriated to the prieſt, and other collections were made for the poor: theſe capital ſtocks were called Patrimonies; a name not denoting any dominion or juriſdiction belonging to the Roman church, or the pope, but to ſignify the eſtate of every church, and was diſtinguiſhed from the patrimonies of private men, as we find in many places of the 12th book of the Code*.

And to create a greater reſpect for the eſtates belonging to the church, it was uſual to annex the name of ſome favourite ſaint which that church held in great veneration; ſo the eſtates of the church of Ravenna were called the patrimony of St. Apollinare; that of Milan, the patrimony of St. Ambroſe; and the eſtates of the Roman church, the patrimony of St. Peter in Ambruzzo.

The bulk of eccleſiaſtical hiſtorians fix the year 606 for the title of univerſal biſhop, being conferred by way of pre-eminence on the pontiff of Rome; a dignity which had been aſſumed by the biſhop of Conſtantinople, and by others in the laſt century, but was now confirmed to pope Boniface III. who, being elected pope, prevailed on the emperor Phocas to take the title of univerſal biſhop from the biſhop of Conſtantinople, and to grant it to him, and his ſucceſſors, by his abſolute decree, which paſſed for that purpoſe. His taking upon him this authority, or dignity, was thought the more extraordinary, as his immediate predeceſſor but one, and probably, the beſt and the greateſt, ſo often condemned it in any biſhop whatſoever, and rejected it with indignation, when offered to himſelf, as vain, proud, impious, blaſphemous and antichriſtian. But

* Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p.

no ſooner had they brought that eccleſiaſtical power to its higheſt pitch, than they began to extend their views, to join inſenſibly the temporal and the ſpiritual power; nor did their boundleſs ambition allow them, or the world, any reſt, till they got themſelves acknowledged for univerſal monarchs, as well as univerſal biſhops, over all where they had any juriſdiction‖.

The church of Scotland were much divided in their ſentiments concerning the time of keeping Eaſter, and were with much difficulty reduced to the celebration of it according to the practice of the church of Rome.

About the year 634 commenced that grand diſpute, which made ſo much noiſe in the Eaſt, whether there were in Chriſt two operating wills, the one human, the other divine, or only one will and one operation: this occaſioned a general diſſention, and the convention of ſeveral councils, and in the fifth and laſt ſeſſion of the Lateran, A. D. 637, under the more immediate direction of pope Honorius, it was concluded in favour of one will. But this did not terminate the diſpute.

However, about the year 646 another diſpute intervened in regard to the titles and authority of the pope, the African biſhop having addreſſed Theodore the pope in a very high ſtile, calling him father of fathers and the ſupreme pontiff of all biſhops: the new primate of Conſtantinople wrote to him as his brother, and concluded with ſaying, the apoſtles had all an equal ſhare of power and of honour. This diſpute ſubſided for a time, and gave place to the revival of the former.

In 649 a council was called by Martin, biſhop of Rome, concerning the two natures and two operations in Chriſt, and the doctrine of one will and one operation condemned and anathematized ‡. The form as follows: — "I Martin, by the mercy of God, biſhop of the holy catholic and apoſtolic church of the city of Rome, have ſigned as judge this definition, con-

‖ Bower's Hiſtory of the Popes, v. ii. p. 550.
‡ Ibid. vol. iii. p. 49.

firming

firming the orthodox faith, and condemning Theodorus, formerly biſhop of Pharan, Cyrus of Alexandria, Sergius, Pyrrhus, and Paul of Conſtantinople, and their heretical writings, with the impious ecthesis and the impious type."

This authoritative definition and decree gave great umbrage, and did not ſoon ſubſide; for it appears, that the authority of the pope, ſo late as the year 669, was a matter of diſpute: it was not acknowledged in Italy itſelf without the limits of the Suburbicarian provinces, the ancient limits of the juriſdiction of the biſhop of Rome. Maurus, biſhop of Ravenna, being ſoon after ſummoned by Vitalianus, to Rome, to give an account of his faith and his conduct, not only refuſed to obey the ſummons, but let the pope know, that he had no authority over him or his ſee. This unexpected anſwer provoked Vitalianus to ſuch a degree, that he immediately thundered againſt Maurus the ſentence of excommunication; but of his excommunication he made no more account than he made of his ſummons; nay, thinking he had as good a right to excommunicate the pope as the pope had to excommunicate him, he retorted the ſentence, and excommunicated him in his turn, which was thought a crime of ſo atrocious a nature, that he was ſtripped of his prieſthood and reduced to the ſtate of a layman: but the biſhop of Ravenna being ſupported by the exarch, he continued, in ſpite of the pope to exerciſe all the functions of his office till his death, and then left it in charge with his laſt breath, never to ſubmit to the undue power aſſumed by the pope, which was ſtrictly adhered to by his ſucceſſor *.

In 680, when Agatho was biſhop of Rome, another council was held at Conſtantinople on the errors of the Monothelites, in a ſpacious hall of the imperial palace, called from the form of the building Trulla, that is, Cupola, from whence it has ſometimes that name: it

* Bowers's Hiſtory of the Popes, vol. iii. p. 87.

conſiſted of 166 biſhops. It was moved at their firſt ſeſſion, that the opinions of the fathers ſhould be carefully and diligently conſulted, in order to determine this point with greater certainty; and accordingly the ten firſt ſeſſions were ſpent in examining paſſages out of the fathers and approved councils; and in the 18th ſeſſion was read, and approved, and ſigned, the definition and decree of the council, firſt acknowledging they received the five general councils; then they anathematized the impious and execrable doctrine of one will, and the abettors of it, among whom was Honorius, biſhop of Rome, Cyrus of Alexandria, Macarius of Antioch, and others; and in the concluſion the imperial edict was read, requiring all the ſubjects of the empire to conform in their belief to the preſent edict, on pain of being depoſed, if eccleſiaſtics; forfeiting their honour and eſtates, if laymen of rank and diſtinction; and if private perſons, to be baniſhed the city of Conſtantinople and all other cities in the empire. This ſevere edict was founded on that doctrine being repugnant to the faith of the holy catholic and apoſtolic church, and the opinion of the fathers.

Such was the conduct and concluſion of the ſixth general council, declared to be of equal authority with the council of Nice, or any other council, and their decrees; according to pope Gregory the Great, equal with the goſpels themſelves; but by this council the infallibility of the pope is irreconcilable with that of the council, Honorius the pope being thereby condemned as a heretic, his books ordered to be burnt, and he over and over anathematized. Hence it is obſerved by ſome authors, that one would think the papal infallibility would be given up by all who pretend to acknowledge the authority and infallibility of this council.

It is alſo remarked, as the concluſions of this council were principally founded on the authority of the fathers, this introduced ſuch a veneration for them, that their authority was almoſt univerſally aſſerted to be the rule of faith and doctrine, anathematizing all who do

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not from the heart believe, and with the mouth profeſs, every thing delivered by the fathers *; notwithſtanding, as our author aſſerts, they muſt then believe the moſt abſurd and contradictory doctrines, doctrines even repugnant to ſcripture, to reaſon, and common ſenſe †. For the primitive fathers went very far in ſuperſtition, even ſo as to imitate the gentiles in their worſhip of dæmons; for they canonized ſaints, and honoured their relics; they varied the mode of baptiſm by ſuffuſion, trine immerſion; introduced exorciſm; Chriſm gave milk and honey to the new baptiſed, and in the euchariſt they mingled water with wine, gave the ſacrament to children, and this continued to be the practice of the church to the twelfth century ‡.

Pope Gregory I. who was ſo remarkable for ſuperſtition and invention, as to be ſurnamed the Great, in-

* Bower's Hiſtory of the Popes, vol. iii. p. 15. Baille, concerning the Right Uſe of the Fathers, lib. ii. chap. iv.—An Eſſay on Scripture Prophecy, Prin. 1724 (*a*).

† St. Auſtin prayed for the dead, for the ſoul of his mother Menica, and held, that prayers for the good were thankſgivings—for thoſe not very bad, propitiations; for thoſe very bad, though of no uſe to the dead, a comfort to the living.—St. Ambroſe prayed for the ſoul of Theodoſius;—St. Gregory for the ſoul of Trajan;—St. Chryſoſtom joined to his prayers for the dead, alms and oblations;—St. Auſtin introduced the veneration of the relics of ſaints, affirming miracles had been wrought by them;—St. Jerom defended the adoration of them. To omit many others, St. Baſil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Gregory Nyſſen, St. Ambroſe, St. Jerom, St. Auſtin, St. Theodoret, St. Fulgentius, St. Gregory the Great, St. Leo, and more have prayed to the ſaints (*b*). St. Cyprian, and a whole council with him condemned the baptiſm adminiſtered by ſuch as they deemed heretics.—Origen, through too much compaſſion of the wicked, aſſerted that the devils themſelves, after a ſevere puniſhment, ſhould at length be ſaved.—And none exceeded Tertullian in an undue veneration for the church. "If thou feareſt heaven will be ſhut againſt thee, ſays he, remember that Chriſt gave the keys to Peter and by him to the church (*c*).

‡ See Delaun's Plea for the Nonconformiſts, and his Authorities, p. 33, and Dr. Mead before quoted.

(*a*) *Mead's Apoſtaſy of Later Times.*
(*b*) *See Thorndyke, in Epil. Part iii. p.* 358.
(*c*) *Sir Peter King, p.* 114, *who cites his Scorphiac, p.* 612.

troduced the doctrine of purgatory; and amongſt other devices of the church of Rome in this century, the biſhops of Rome were firſt honoured with the triple crown.—It was required that the traditions of the Romiſh church ſhould be deemed as ſacred, as if delivered by the mouth of St. Peter himſelf. — The heathen temples (ſacred to God) were dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and to other nominal ſaints, and it was decreed that the church ſhould be an aſylum to all who fled to it, though guilty of the greateſt crimes. — No man was to marry a woman to whom his father had been godfather in baptiſm: — abſtinence from certain meats and drinks on certain days was deemed meritorious: — all ſaints-day inſtituted by Boniface IV. A. D. 610‖, and the number of feaſts greatly augmented: — the feaſt of the circumciſion: — the feaſt of the purification; — the annunciation of the Virgin Mary: — and the feaſt of the depoſition or ſleep of the Virgin Mary fixed to the 15th of Auguſt, and the practice of faſting on Saturdays forbidden on pain of excommunication for the laity, and depoſition of the clergy *.—But amongſt other things, the Lord's prayer was decreed to be read in their public worſhip at Rome, and was, ſoon after, injoined on all the churches 618‖‖; and organs were firſt brought into the Chriſtian church by pope Vitalianus, about the year 660†.

The ſixth general council, held at Conſtantinople in 680, decreed, that Jeſus Chriſt ſhould be painted in a human form upon the croſs, which picture of him ſhould be put up in churches to repreſent, in the moſt lively manner imaginable to all Chriſtians, the death and paſſion of our Bleſſed Saviour: at other times he was delineated in the form of a lamb, and the Holy Ghoſt by that of a dove **. Private maſſes became

‖ Dupin, Picart, Hiſtory of Popery, 2 vols. 4to.
* Bower's Hiſtory of the Popes, vol. iii. p. 153.
‖‖ Hiſtory of Popery, vol. i.
† Norman on Church Muſic, p. 37.
** Picart's Ceremonies, vol. i. p. 347.

more

more frequent, and they gave the communion in both kinds with leavened bread. Another council was held in 692 at Trullo; they made 102 canons, moſt of them of a trifling nature, others very ſevere and opreſſive to ſuch as differed in points of faith or diſcipline *.

Theodore, as he expreſſes it, had the ſatisfaction, before he died, of ſeeing moſt if not all the novel doctrines and Romiſh ceremonies eſtabliſhed all over England, and the churches of the Scotch eſtabliſhment, in this century †.

CENTURY THE EIGHTH.

In the Eighth century we have many melancholy inſtances of the great corruption in the Chriſtian church.

The number of church-officers was, indeed, in ſome meaſure fixed, and the ſeveral orders of archbiſhops, biſhops, deans, canons, curates, &c. &c. in a manner pretty near to what ſubſiſts at preſent in the Romiſh church ‖.

The pope now aſſumed to himſelf the power of diſpoſing of the pall independently of the emperors, and declared by repeated decrees, it was unlawful for a metropolitan archbiſhop or primate to exerciſe any branch of his power till he had received his pall from Rome; and in ſeveral decrees the metropolitical juriſdiction and power were ſaid to be conferred by the pall §.

Gregory III. in 734, by a ſolemn ſentence, deprived the emperor Leo, both of his empire and the communion of the faithful, becauſe he would not admit of the worſhip of images ‡. Pope Leo III. ſet the imperial crown on the head of Charlemaign, all the people crying out, To Charles Auguſtus, crowned of God

* Dupin, ſeventh Century.
† Bower's Hiſtory of the Popes, vol. iii. p. 156.
‖ Rolt's Introduction to the Lives of the Reformers, p. vii.
§ Bower's Hiſtory of the Popes, vol. iii. p. 7.
‡ Hiſtory of Popery, vol. I, p. 138.

great

great and peaceable emperor of the Romans, long life and victorious (after which ſalutations the emperor adored the pope himſelf by kiſſing his feet). The pope gladly approved the acclamations and homage paid by the people, eſpecially as he ſaw by his being inſtrumental in inveſting the emperor with ſuch dignity, he thereby inſured to himſelf greater power, dignity, and influence.

This is the lateſt date of the commencement of the Anti-chriſtian reign, 756; the papal ſee having then eſtabliſhed its temporal juriſdiction by being inveſted with the exarchate of Ravenna ‖ ‖.

In Italy, where the wealth of the monaſteries had not made them conſiderable before the year 750, they had paſſed unregarded by the Gothic kings, the emperors and the kings of Lombardy, ſo that the election remained ſtill in the monks, only with the ſuperintendence of the biſhops.—But the biſhops being become uneaſy to the monaſteries, by their aſpiring to too much power, the abbots and monks, to deliver themſelves from this ſubjection, betook themſelves to the popes beſeeching him to exempt them from the biſhop's juriſdiction.

This was gladly embraced by the popes who ſaw their intereſt in creating, by this means, an immediate dependence on themſelves in cities belonging to other governments, and in enlarging their authority over other biſhops; beſides that it imported extreamly, that ſo great a body as that of the monks, who in thoſe times were almoſt the only perſons who addicted themſelves to learning ſhould depend entirely on the ſee of Rome, and this exemption quickly extended itſelf to all the monaſteries, which, by this means, became more cloſely united to that ſee, and ſeparated from the biſhops. But St. Bernard, deteſting this innovation, remonſtrates to pope Eugene II. on the great abuſe of an abbot refuſing to obey his

‖ ‖ See Lowman's Paraphraſe on the Revelations, p. 142.

biſhop,

biſhop, and the biſhop his metropolitan; that the church militant ought to govern itſelf after the example of the church triumphant, where an angel never ſaith, I will not ſubmit to an archangel. But what would this ſaint have ſaid, if he had lived in one of the following ages? St. Bernard ſaith, Mezeray loudly condemns thoſe exemptions, for, ſaith he, to exempt abbots from the juriſdiction of biſhops, what is it other than commanding them to rebel? And is it not as monſtrous a deformity in the body of the church, to unite immediately a chapter or an abbey to the holy ſee, as in a human body to join a finger to a head? But it is obſervable by the way, that the exemption from temporal rights, which the biſhops themſelves had granted them, opened the door to this ſpiritual exemption *.

The kiſſing the pope's toe was firſt ſubmitted to by the emperor Juſtinian in 711. Laymen excluded as not eligible for biſhops, prieſt or deacons, 768. The worſhip of images was firſt made a law to the church, by the ſecond council of Nice, in the year 789, which council was afterwards oppoſed by that of Frankfort in 794 ||.

The diſpute between the eaſtern and weſtern biſhops, whether the Holy Ghoſt proceeded from the Father and the Son, or from the Father only, was decided, both in Spain and France, in favour of the former opinion; and whether Jeſus Chriſt may be ſtiled the adopted Son of God, was decided in the negative, and the conſubſtantiality of the Son with the Father aſſerted.

CENTURY THE NINTH.

In the ninth century, the papal dignity received a remarkable increaſe, with reſpect to the church. The pope of Rome aſſumed the title of univerſal biſhop, or head of the church; and ſtrenuouſly laboured to im-

* Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 34.
|| Laval's Hiſtory of the Reformation in France, Dedication.

prove

prove this at first unmeaning title into something more substantial.

Though the eastern patriarchs were not wanting in a vigorous opposition, yet the bishops of Rome were very successful in subjecting most of the western churches to themselves. The means made use of for this purpose, and the principal causes of it, were the superstitious veneration for the pretended chair of St. Peter; — the divisions amongst the clergy, which produced the custom of appealing to the popes—the obligation laid on the missionaries employed for preaching the gospel among the pagans, to instruct them in the authority and dignity of the pope—their zeal likewise in asserting and vindicating his pre-eminence to those of all other ecclesiastics, which was confirmed by grant of privileges, and particularly by sending the pallium—the fantastical desire of some prelates to be consecrated by the pope himself — the separation from the eastern churches, which was always decried as heretical—the strict care taken to attach the body of the monks to the service of the see of Rome—the collections of the papal decretals, and of the canon laws of Rome, &c. were compiled for the direction of churches in general.

The extent of this authority cannot be precisely determined: it appears to be much larger in churches newly planted, than those of earlier date §.

Infallibility could not be admitted against the evidence of the fall of Honorius, and of the manifestly-wicked lives of some popes; nor does it appear to have been a point fixed, since it was thought necessary, that the pope should not only transmit his confession of faith, but also at his elevation take the solemn oath of religion: besides, the decrees of councils were preferred to the sentences of the popes. Some churches in Africa and Aquitia asserted their freedom; some bishops did not allow the pope to be their judge; and the emperor and kings of Spain, France and England

§ Walch.

ſtill exerciſed their ſupreme power in eccleſiaſtical matters; and it is a ridiculous pretence, that the pope at this time had a right of creating and depoſing kings: for, on the other hand, the ſovereigns of the city of Rome, who were firſt the Greek emperors, then Charlemagne looked on the popes as their ſubjects, and did ſummon them judicially to appear before them.

Nevertheleſs, in this century, the biſhops of Rome became poſſeſſed of territories and ſubjects, which at firſt proceeded from the princes and kings of France of the Carlovingeian line, who, in a great meaſure owing their promotion to the friendſhip of the pope, in the warmth of their gratitude, beſtowed poſſeſſions in Italy on the ſee of Rome: but, then, they conveyed to the pope no more than an uſufructuary enjoyment of certain territories, ſtill retaining the ſovereignty. In like manner the popes were inveſted with certain prerogatives, yet were ſubject to Charlemagne, as they had been before to the Greek emperors.

But the poſterity of Charlemagne having been driven out of Italy in the year 884, pope Hadrian III. ordained, that the popes ſhould, for the future, be conſecrated without applying to the emperor at all ‡. The emperor being yet young, and Germany all in commotions, this juncture invited the pope to exclude him entirely from the election of the biſhops and abbots, and to that end ſent him a monitory, whereby the emperor was forbid to concern himſelf any more with thoſe diſpoſitions *.

However, we may, in the laſt place, mention that, about the cloſe of this century, the kiſſing of the foot of the pope took place, as a token of reſpect, which had before been paid to the high prieſt among the pagans.

From this time, to about the middle of the next century, wherein Italy laboured under the extremeſt

‡ Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 88.
* Ibid. 106.

confuſions,

confuſions, as well in the civil government as eccleſiaſtical, eſpecially in the papacy, we muſt not expect to find any traces or forms of good government in the church, but a mere chaos of impieties, and a general preparative and forerunner of the miſerable revolutions and diſorders which followed.

Popes were then excommunicated by their ſucceſſors, and their acts cancelled and annulled, not excepting the very adminiſtration of the ſacraments. Six popes were driven out, and dethroned, by thoſe who aſpired to their places.

Romanus I. did the ſame to Stephen VI. which Stephen had done to Formoſus; and Theodorus II. authoriſed all the acts of Formoſus; and John X. who ſucceeded Theodorus, confirmed the acts of Formoſus, and condemned the judgment of Stephen VI. Two popes were put to death, Leo V. by Chriſtophorus, and afterwards Chriſtophorus in the next century. In ſhort, ſuch a ſeries of wild diſorders gave occaſion to hiſtorians to ſay, that thoſe times produced monſters inſtead of popes. Fra. Paola makes a very judicious reflection on the diſorders in thoſe times: "I have not found (ſaith he) reaſons ſufficient to prove the hiſtory of pope Joan, no more than I have met with any to convince me of the contrary; however, to ſpeak ſincerely, I incline to the opinion of its being falſe; but not for its abſurdity, that age producing things as extraordinary as a lady's being papeſs†."

The Greek church which had held many diſputes with the weſtern biſhops, eſpecially ſince the ſixth century entirely ſeparated from the ſee of Rome, with reſpect to ſome doctrines and ceremonies which will hereafter be ſpecified.

The cuſtom of obſerving Lent was firſt introduced into England by Ercumbert, the ſeventh king of Kent: at the beginning of this century ſeveral monaſteries of nuns were eſtabliſhed, the Roman ritual introduced into moſt

† Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 62.

churches,

churches, the number of ſolemn and particular feſtivals was increaſed, faſting in the vigils commanded, and the feaſt of the preſentation of the Virgin in the temple was obſerved by the Latins.

The conſecrating of churches and altars was moſt regularly obſerved, and the cuſtom of burying in churches introduced.

CENTURY THE TENTH.

In the tenth century the election of the pope ſtill remained in the clergy, the ſenate, and the people, the ſoldiery not excepted; but the freedom of their election was corrupted by bribery and violence. Theodora, a famous courtezan, got her profeſſed lover choſen pope, who was called John X. A. D. 915; and John XI. was choſen pope at the age of twenty.

Nor is there any century in which the Roman chair was diſgraced by ſo many profligate popes as in this. The power of the popes being enlarged, and confirmed, they were conſidered as biſhops of the world; and their juriſdiction was admitted in all matters, at leaſt which are ſtyled eccleſiaſtical. Princes now began to ſeek their friendſhip, and found their account in it too; and then it was no wonder if the authority of St. Peter's ſucceſſors ſhould be readily acknowledged, and their vanity ſoothed and flattered. Hence we find, that about this period the popes began to change their Chriſtian names for others, and the biſhop of Rome claimed the appellation of Pope in contradiſtinction from other biſhops ‡; and even aſſerted, that the biſhops of Rome, as ſucceſſors of St. Peter, and vicegerents of Chriſt, have all power, both in heaven and earth. In order to eſtabliſh this, a power was aſſerted of making articles of faith; and great zeal was uſed to ſubject all eccleſiaſtical perſons immediately to the ſee of Rome.

In A. D. 963, Otho of Saxony entered Italy, and ſubdued it by arms; and in order to ſettle ſome form of

‡ It is obſerved by Muratori, in the Hiſtory of Italy, that the appellation of pope was not in thoſe days peculiar to the biſhops of Rome, but alſo borne by other conſiderable biſhops.

government

government there, he assembled a little council of bishops, wherein he deposed pope John XII. but he had been made pope at the age of eighteen, and had dishonoured the pontificate by adulteries and perjuries, and and the rest of his character was unsuitable to his office‖.

Otho obliged the Roman people, and pope Leo VIII. who had been put in the place of pope John, to give up to the emperors the right of electing popes for thirty-six years, and within that space, out of twelve two were elected peaceably, but the others not without tumult and disorder, which occasioned Benedict V. to be carried prisoner by Otho I. Benedict VI. by Otho II. John XIII. was strangled by one who aspired to the dignity; Boniface VII. robbed the treasury of St. Peter, and fled; Joannes XVII. or rather XVI. went into voluntary banishment; so that Baronicus observes, though these are placed in the catalogue to make up the number, the church had then in effect no other head than Jesus Christ himself, and we may justly enquire after the infallibility.

In the midst of the confusions, the archbishop of Rheims took upon him the care of the French church. —In Germany, the emperor being no less pious than brave, and several of their bishops religiously disposed, they applied themselves to the prevention of disorders, and to promoting a reformation; insomuch, that the German churches are said to flourish at this time*.—In England, as king Alfred had restored the study of literature in the latter end of the last century, the kings, his successors, took some care about the reformation and ecclesiastical discipline: but we find the laws were enacted, and several regulations made, evidently shew their undue attachments to the see of Rome; such particularly as related to the payment of tythes, Peter-pence, and some others.

‖ Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 80.

* Dupin's History of the Church, vol. iii. p. 80.

There was but little controverſy about points of doctrine in this century, but in relation to the conſecrated elements.—The tranſlation of biſhops was now frequent —Marriage was forbid to be celebrated on any Sunday, or in Lent—Bells were firſt conſecrated—and the ſolemn canonization of a ſaint by the pope was introduced.

The general commemoration of all deceaſed ſaints was inſtituted at the end of this century.

And till towards the end of this century, the holy ſcriptures were read, and divine ſervice celebrated, in the vulgar tongue †.

Octavianus was the firſt who changed his Name for the ſake of obtaining the dignity of biſhop of Rome, A. D. 956.

CENTURY THE ELEVENTH.

In the Eleventh Century we find the biſhops of Rome were by no means content with confining their juriſdiction to matters which may be ſtiled eccleſiaſtical; they were not ſatisfied with depriving princes of the right of inveſtiture, and arrogating to themſelves the confirmation of the newly-elected biſhops, as indiſpenſibly requiſite; but they aſſumed the diſpoſal of the moſt profitable benefices, as the ſureſt means of providing for their creatures; and pope Alexander, in 1062, ſold ſeveral biſhopricks, which gave occaſion to many bitter complaints both in Germany and England *.

The appellation of pope, which originally ſignifies papa, was firſt appropriated to the biſhop of Rome by Gregory VII. A. D. 1050.

The cardinals had the red hat now given them as an enſign of their dignity, and the election of the popes was limited to the cardinals, beſides other ſingular privileges which they now enjoy.

Pope Gregory VII. forced the biſhops to take an oath

† Preface to Laval's Hiſtory of the Reformation in France.

* Walch's Hiſtory tranſlated, p. 182. See the Hiſtoir. du Droit Public. Eccles. Franc. and Moſheim. Inſtit. Hiſtoir. Eccles. p. 506.

of fealty to the popes, and by a decree enacted, that none ſhould dare to condemn any one who had appealed to the pope.—Having firſt openly avowed, that as pope, he had an inherent and abſolute power over all ſovereigns, he took upon him to cite the emperor Henry to appear and anſwer for his conduct at Rome. Henry deſpiſed thoſe citations, for which he was excommunicated by Gregory, who threatened the ſame to Philip I. of France, and iſſued his fulminations againſt moſt of the princes of Europe. He governed all the Weſtern churches with an abſolute authority, and did all that was in his power to get himſelf made the ſovereign monarch of the univerſe.—The *dictatus papæ*, which contains twenty-ſeven propoſitions in behalf of the higheſt pretenſions of the court of Rome, was wrote by this pope. The papiſts confeſs they are aſhamed of thoſe propoſitions; and particularly the twenty-third, which declares, that the Roman pontiff being canonically ordained, becomes undoubtedly holy by the merits of St. Peter *.

Pope Gregory VII. beſides his repeated excommunications, and the frequent rebellions which he ſtirred up and fomented, prevailed even with the emperor's eldeſt ſon to join in rebellion againſt his father, who, by this means, was almoſt driven out of Italy; and the ſucceeding pope, Victor III. purſued the ſame methods in carrying on the war, poured out his excommunications afreſh upon the Emperor, plyed him with frequent rebellions, urged his ſon Henry againſt him, and at length induced him to take arms; ſo that at laſt, after great viciſſitudes of fortune, he came to an accommodation, but was deceived in the conditions, and in the end reduced to a private life, by a reſignation of his empire to his ſon, whom he cauſed to be crowned king.

This unnatural ſon, when his father came to the diet, held at Mentz, with a numerous army, not long after, went to meet him, and caſting himſelf at his feet,

* Gregory's Life by Anonymous.

begged

begged pardon with all the outward marks of a ſincere repentance: the emperor was wrought upon by this feigned ſubmiſſion, and they both went together to Bingen, where the ſon deluded the father, raiſing a jealouſy in him, that the archbiſhop of Mentz might keep him priſoner, if he entered that city before he was abſolved from his excommunication: therefore, adviſing him to ſtay at Bingen, while he went to diſpoſe the princes of the adverſe party, at that diet, to a reconciliation, the emperor ſwallowed the bait. The ſon went to the diet without him, and by the inſtigation of the pope, got himſelf proclaimed emperor.

Paſcal II. the fourth pope from Gregory VII. took up the ſpiritual arms of excommunication, to wreſt the inveſtiture of biſhops and abbots out of the hands of the emperors, held a council at Guaſtalla in Mantua, and another at Troyes in France, and renewed the decrees of Gregory VII. that no laick ſhould intermeddle with the collation of benefices. Violent quarrels, conteſts, and wars, enſued, which extended to the next century *. But the emperor came to Italy with a powerful army, and obtained a revocation of that decree.

Some fathers of the council made uſe of this dilemma. "If the decree, by which the pope conſented to yield up the inveſtitures to the emperor, was lawful, it ought to be obſerved: but if it be unjuſt, and, as ſome ſay, heretical, the pope, as the author of it, is therefore unjuſt and heretical alſo †."

Indulgences, as they are now underſtood, and the office of the Virgin Mary, as it is now uſed, by the church of Rome, had the ſanction of a decree by the

* Father Paul, p. 92.

† Here our author adds, by way of comment, that a conceſſion of a thing, juſt and due in itſelf, is valid, though made through fear; and on the other ſide, an act is never juſtifiable, if againſt the law of God, by the ſtrongeſt impreſſions of fear that can be pleaded: becauſe the natural divine law is, of itſelf, good and immutable, and commands things in their nature important; and that therefore the commands of God bind abſolutely, and not the commands of the church.

council of Clermont, A. D. 1095 ‡. About the end of this century the practice of diſciplining one's ſelf was introduced; — the cuſtom of doing penance for others took place; — the feaſts of the four ſeaſons were obſerved; — ſeveral councils enjoined abſtinence on Fridays and Saturdays; maſs for the living was to be celebrated but once a day, a ſecond permitted for the dead; the prieſts were enjoined penance, who, through negligence, ſhould let fall the hoſtia; — all the faithfull were obliged to communicate at Eaſter; — the communion was hitherto received under both kinds ‖; — a decree was made in England againſt the marriage of prieſts, by Lanfranc, biſhop of Canterbury, in a ſynod held at Wincheſter ‖ ‖.

CENTURY THE TWELFTH.

In this century the pope of Rome and other eccleſiaſtics attempted with great vigour to ſubject to themſelves princes, and their kingdoms and ſtates, urging, that the ſplendor of their dignity was to that of the majeſty of emperors and kings as the effulgence of the ſun to the borrowed light of the moon; and therefore they demanded from crowned heads the moſt extravagant marks of reſpect: — they then claimed the right of conferring royal dignity, and particularly preſumed to conſider the imperial crown as abſolutely at their diſpoſal, and by the pretenders they ſet up, diſpoſed of entire kingdoms, provinces, and countries: they excommunicated emperors, kings, and princes, on the ſlighteſt occaſions; laid their dominions under an interdict; diſcharged their ſubjects from their fidelity, and even diſſolved the ſacred bonds of marriage *.

‡ Laval's Hiſtory of the Reformation in France.
‖ Dupin's Church Hiſtory, vol. iii. p. 121.
‖ ‖ Laval's Dedication to the Hiſtory of the Reformation in France.
* Walch's Hiſtory of the Popes.

And

And Dupin †, much to the ſame purpoſe, tells us, that the church of Rome was diſturbed by obſtinate ſchiſms; the popes at war with the emperors; the kings and biſhops diſputing about their temporal rights; the immunities of the church, and of eccleſiaſtical perſons, ſtrenuouſly oppoſed, and in conſequence, were as vigorouſly ſupported by the biſhops, and maintained by the decrees of councils; the church over-ſtocked with monaſtic and other orders of monks; ſcholaſtic divinity made the common ſtudy of the clergy; and the dignity of the ſacraments, and the external worſhip, were greatly affected by many prevailing hereſies. The ſtruggles and contentions betwixt the pope and the emperor were not confined to Italy and Germany alone, which were the kingdoms and dominions of the emperor; but ſeveral biſhops in France took occaſion to oppoſe the king; but, as they were not enough united to enter all into the ſame league with the pope, the king generally carried his point §.

In England, where the king had hitherto conferred the biſhopricks and abbies, Anſelm, archbiſhop of Canterbury, in the year 1102, in obedience to the pope's decrees, began to refuſe to conſecrate biſhops nominated by the king. This conteſt held for many years, the king, viz. Henry I. maintaining his right, and the archbiſhop, ſupported by the pope, oppoſing it: the king, in hopes to bring the pope to hear reaſon, ſent an ambaſſador to Rome, who, provoked by the rough anſwers and menaces of the pope, declared, that his maſter would never yield up his authority, though he loſt his kingdom in its defence; to which the pope, with no leſs boldneſs, replied, he would never ſuffer the king to nominate to the benefices if he loſt his head. The king, on the ambaſſador's return, exerted his authority; and Anſelm, the archbiſhop, was obliged to quit the kingdom; nor could he return without

† Dupin, Century XII.

§ Dupin's Preface to the twelfth Century, folio edit.

complying with the king's pleasure. — But this prince dying, and a civil war ensuing, it was easy for the clergy to introduce into England what the pope had done in his empire.

In that space of time, between the years 1122, wherein Henry renounced the investiture by the pope, and 1145, it became a rule almost every where in Germany, that, upon the death of a bishop, his successor should be chosen by the chapter, and confirmed by the metropolitan; that the abbots should be chosen by the monks, and then confirmed by the bishop, if the monastery were not exempted and if it were, then the pope was to be applied to for his confirmation; that the other benefices, which were *de jure patronatus*, should be conferred by the bishops upon the presentation of the patron; and that all the rest should be at the entire disposal of the bishop. — Nevertheless, the election of the popedom came under no new regulation *.

However, the emperor held a right with respect to some churches; and the pope, unwilling to revive the old quarrel, as it were, shared snacks with him under various pretences.

France, however, retained the royal prerogative (called the Regale) of conferring all simple benefices vacant upon the bishops death, until a successor was appointed. — But near the close of the next century we find Boniface VIII. had a sharp contest with Philip of France, and ruined the kingdom, in great measure, by the excommunications, interdicts, &c. and, at length, deprived the king of his throne, and for some time gave it to the emperor Albert, depriving those of their benefices, who held them under the king †. This proved one considerable means of enlarging the power of the pope.

Another considerable means of increasing the papal power was the business of tythes, first fruits, &c. which

* Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 106.

† Abstract from Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, ibid.

was made to extend to fiſheries, hay, wool, bees, &c. which were exacted under the ſevereſt cenſures. — And in order the better to promote their wealth and power, they revoked a law that had been made, that the church ſhould reject the donations and legacies of public ſinners; but this obſtacle was removed, and the pope and clergy endeavoured to prove thoſe donations a kind of extenuations where they could not be pronounced meritorious.

The large opportunities which the court of Rome had in their hands, of obliging by the diſpoſal of ſo many benefices, drew thither a concourſe of the clergy of all ſorts; of thoſe who had no beneficies, to obtain them; and thoſe who had, to get them exchanged for better: and this occaſioned frequent abſence, they were obliged to purchaſe indulgence or abſence of leave from their cures. — Commendams was alſo another pretty device: when an elective benefice became vacant ſuch as a biſhopric abby, — the care of it was recommended by the ſuperior to ſome perſon of merit, or of intereſt, till another was choſe: afterwards it was given for a certain time ‡.

But among other meaſures that contributed to render the pope ſupreme governor of all Chriſtendom, and to center the riches of the world in the treaſury of the church, were the cruſades or martial expeditions againſt infidels, eſpecially as the clergy were fond of preaching againſt heretics, as they called them and their protectors. "This device," ſays Mezeray, "was a very ſucceſsful means to aggrandize the pope; for they ordered princes to enroll themſelves in thoſe expeditions; they retained the ſovereign command of thoſe armies by their legates; and they became, in ſome ſort, lords in chief of all who went to the cruſade, not only becauſe the pope exacted obedience from them, but becauſe they took the other under their protection till their return, which

‡ This is farther conſidered in the State of Religion in England, introductory to the Neceſſity of a Reformation.

was like letters of ſtate, and ſuſpended all civil and criminal proceedings §."

But the greateſt ſupport of all this uſurpation was the eſtabliſhment of the inquiſition in Italy, and the confirmation of Gratian's collection of canon laws. — Add to this the practice of canonization as an excellent means to ſecure conſtancy in the faith of the Romiſh church; to enrich the papal treaſury; and to extend that power not only to the diſpoſal of temporal crowns and kingdoms, but even of celeſtial crowns too, when it was ſubſervient to their ambition or intereſt.

Pope Celeſtine III. was a remarkable inſtance of this boundleſs ambition, who having been formerly obliged by Henry with ſeveral favours, was more inclinable to crown him, in order to which the young emperor haſtened to Rome with his empreſs, and they were both crowned by this holy father in an unprecidented and moſt remarkable manner. The ceremony is thus related *: after the emperor had taken his oath to defend the church, and the patrimony of St. Peter, &c. the emperor and empreſs were brought into the church and placed by the pope; and maſs being ſolemnly celebrated by him, he anointed firſt the emperor, uſing certain ſolemn words, and afterwards the empreſs; then ſitting down in his pontifical chair, he held the imperial crown between his feet, and the emperor kneeling and bowing down his head, and likewiſe the empreſs did reſpectively receive the crown from his feet, which was no ſooner on each of their heads, but the pope, with his foot, ſpurned it off to the ground, in token that he had power to depoſe them at his pleaſure: after which, the cardinals ſtanding round received the ſaid crown, and reverently put it upon the head, firſt of the emperor and then of the empreſs, and then concluded the coronation with pomp and magnificence un-

§ Mezeray's Life of Philip Auguſtus.

* Hiſtory of Popery, vol. i. p. iii. p. 417, who cites Hoveden, Vignier, Baronius, Ranulphus in Polychronico, lib. vii. c. xxvi.

heard of till that time. Indeed the court of Rome was amazingly ſplendid by the great number of officers belonging to it, and the many rites and ceremonies that were obſerved in all their public acts of religion.

The ninth general council was held at Lateran, A. D. 1123, wherein they granted remiſſion of ſins to ſuch who went a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, or in aid to the catholic Chriſtians againſt infidels, and excommunicated ſuch as, having been croſſed by the pope for that purpoſe, relinquiſhed their pilgrimage ‡. And the tenth general council, 1139, was only, or principally, to declare the decrees of pope Peter of Leon null and void.

In this century ſeveral inſtitutions took place: two military orders of monks were appointed, viz. thoſe of St. John of Jeruſalem, who were to take care of the pilgrims who went to that city: — the other were the templers, whoſe office it was to provide for the ſafety of pilgrims, by fighting in their defence againſt ſuch as oppoſed or moleſted them *.—The Benedictine order of monks, which had been introduced in the Eaſt, prevailed in the Weſt, and were, by permiſſion of the pope, become almoſt independent of their biſhops. — The biſhops had in almoſt all churches their officials to perform divine ſervice for them: — academies were generally eſtabliſhed throughout Italy and France to qualify for the office of the prieſthood: — the canonization of ſaints was appropriated to the pope by Alexander III. 1160, and the remiſſion of certain ſins reſerved to the pope: others were pardonable by the biſhops in general: communion in both kinds was yet retained: — baptiſm was chiefly adminiſtered on ſolemn days: but what is more remarkable, the holy inquiſition, as it is impiouſly called, with all the train of the moſt arbitrary and tyrannical perſecutions and torture, generally fol-

‡ Dupin, Century XII.
* Dupin.

lowed

lowed by the moſt inhuman and cruel deaths, was erected, A. D. 1198 *, but according to others, it did not commence, or be put in full force till the year 1204, againſt the Albigenſes.

CENTURY THE THIRTEENTH.

In the Thirteenth Century we ſee the power of the popiſh prelates at its greateſt height; but withal ſo ſtrained, that it was natural for the cords to break. That ſummit of power ſeems to terminate with pope Boniface the VIIIth, towards the cloſe of this century, who arrogated to himſelf the power of depoſing princes by divine right—publiſhed a bull, by which he forbid all princes to exact any thing out of the eccleſiaſtical revenues.—He likewiſe inſtituted a jubilee, whereby he granted plenary indulgences to all who ſhould viſit the church of St. Peter and St. Paul at Rome, and ordained the ſame ſhould be obſerved every century. The opening of this jubilee brought vaſt numbers to Rome, and pope Boniface, to ſhew his ſovereign authority in temporals as well as ſpirituals, appeared at the public ſolemnities, ſometimes in his pontificals, and at others in an imperial dreſs, with this motto, *Ecce duo Gladii.* Indeed, in reſpect to the pope of Rome's ſupremacy over the whole church, the ancient maxims were ſtill retained, and inſtances are not wanting of their putting them in practice when they had opportunity †.

Father Paul gives us a compendium of theſe matters: he ſays, "By various methods the popes drew to themſelves a great part of the collation of benefices in all the Chriſtian kingdoms in the weſt; but, in the eaſtern churches, they were not allowed to diſpoſe of one benefice. In Italy, indeed, they met with ſuch great ſucceſs, that they flattered themſelves they ſhould impoſe on all Europe.

In England, where the benefices are very rich, the Roman courtiers made ſuch mighty acquiſitions, that,

† Blair.
* Walch's Hiſtory.

in

in the year 1232, the clergy and military men of the kingdom formed a confederacy or aſſociation, and pillaged all the goods and revenues of the beneficed Roman clergy throughout the iſland. The pope commanded the king, under pain of excommunication, to chaſtiſe them with his temporal arms, and the biſhops to excommunicate them; but the confederacy was too ſtrong, either for the king to puniſh, or the biſhops to excommunicate them.

Pope Innocent IV. ſomewhat incenſed at it, ſent one Martin, a kinſman of his, to renew the pretenſions of the court of Rome. The Engliſh complained to the king, that the Italians had got poſſeſſion of all the benefices, and the king drove Martin out of the kingdom; and, making a computation of the revenues, which the pope drew out of the kingdom, found that they were equal to his own revenues, which amounted to 60,000 marks: and, upon his laying theſe grievances before the pope, in the council of Lyons, where he preſided, he was anſwered, that the council was not aſſembled for that affair, nor was that the ſeaſon to remedy it. He had called it, he pretended, to give ſuccours to the Holy Land; but his true motive was, to excommunicate the emperor Frederic *.

Nevertheleſs, the court ceaſed not to make new attempts in the year 1253, requiring the biſhop of Lincoln to confer a benefice upon a Genoeſe; which he rejected, at it was againſt the canons of the church: but he was nevertheleſs excommunicated by the pope. However, this good man died before the ſentence could be executed, and the pope was ſo malevolent, that he ordered a proceſs againſt him, to take him out of his grave, and ſent it to the king to execute.

In the year 1258, Alexander IV. his ſucceſſor, on the like occaſion, excommunicated the archbiſhop of York ‡, who withſtood the proſecution with great

* Matt. Paris, anno 1245. § i.

‡ Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 147.

fortitude;

fortitude; and, drawing near his end, wrote a very pious letter to the pope, exhorting him to suppress these innovations so injurious to the church, and so dangerous to the safety of his own soul.

As for cardinals, nothing can be surprising that is said of them, when one considers the stile of the court of Rome, *regibus æqui parantur* ‖: whence they conclude, saith he, that no revenue is too great for them, that is not super-abounding for kings themselves; and it is for this reason, that popes have granted them the privilege of being capable of holding all sorts of benefices, either secular or regular. But is there any thing in this that exceeds the ordinary terms of speaking on this subject, seeing it is the tenet of every canonist, that the pope can grant dispensations for holding as many benefices as he pleases? and this was sometimes done contrary to the letter of the law, and therefore, in some parts of Europe, treated with marks of detestation.

But, at length, this supremacy became greatly curtailed by some of those advocates and champions for truth, who, notwithstanding any or all the discouragements, dared to assert the scriptures as the only rule of faith *.

The popes themselves gave many flagrant instances of their fallibility, even in doctrine, crowned heads opposed their insolence, and publicly declared them heretics, and that too with the approbation of many eminent divines. But the great blow to this supremacy was the maxim first reduced to practice, by the councils of Pisa, Constance, and Basil, and by the two last established as an article of faith. That the pope is subject to a general council, and bound to obey their decrees; and that, in case of necessity, he is even obliged to apply to them for their judgment and protection. Which doctrine proved the more fatal at Rome, as it has been received by the Gallican church, who

‖ Vide Nicol. de Clemangis corrupto Ecclesiæ Statu, c. xi.
* See Rolt's History of the Reformers.

have

have ever ſince ſtrictly adhered to the two following maxims, always looked upon in France as indiſputable.

The firſt is, that the pope has no authority or right to command or order any thing, either in general or particular, in which the temporalities or civil rights of the kingdom are concerned.

The ſecond is, that, notwithſtanding the pope's ſupremacy is owned in matters purely ſpiritual, this is to be underſtood as under the regulation, and ſubordinate to, the decrees of councils, canons, &c. and the ancient and preſent privileges of that nation †. This was further ratified in the fifteenth century.

But we nevertheleſs find, that they retained a veneration for the holy catholic father, and adhered to as many of his favourite tenets and cuſtoms, as conſiſted with their civil eſtabliſhment.

CENTURY THE FOURTEENTH.

This century affords many dreadful examples of the popes and biſhops exciting and inflaming catholic princes againſt the Albigenſes, and all others, whom they ſtigmatiſed with the name of heretics, either by public cruſades, or private tribunals before inquiſitors, to deſtroy them. Accordingly ſeveral religious orders were inſtituted in this century, viz. of the preaching brothers, whoſe office and buſineſs was to be zealous declaimers againſt the Albigenſes. They had a monaſtery at Paris, in St. James's houſe, thence called Jacobins—another order of minims—of Auguſtine hermits—Carmelites—the order of Maria de la Merci—of ſervites and celeſtins: theſe grew ſo numerous, that Gregory X. at the general council, forbid eſtabliſhing any new ones §. Bowing at the name of Jeſus was introduced into the church, by the decree of the

† The particulars of thoſe privileges, &c. included in twenty articles, may be ſeen in Broughton's Dictionary.

§ Dupin's Hiſtory of the Church, vol. IV. p. 319.

ſecond

ſecond council of Lyons, 1212; kneeling at the communion, by pope Honorius, 1214‡. That called the feaſt of the holy ſacrament was likewiſe inſtituted in the church of Rome, but not univerſally received till the next century. Auricular confeſſion was made neceſſary to ſalvation by the council of Lateran, the twelfth general council, 1215; and tranſubſtantiation, after a diſpute of four hundred years, concerning the nature of the ſacrament of our Lord's ſupper, pope Innocent III. determined the matter, and procured a decree for making it an article of the catholic faith in the Lateran council, 1215*.

The thirteenth general council was held at Lyons, 1245, as well for civil as eccleſiaſtical affairs. Three points were aimed at by the pope, viz. to relieve the empire of Conſtantinople againſt the Greeks, the empire of Germany againſt the Tartars, and the Holy Land againſt the Saracens: for theſe purpoſes, they decreed the twentieth part of the revenues of all eccleſiaſtical benefices, and the tenth of the revenues of the pope; but exempted the croiſado prieſt from any contributions in this council. The pope excommunicated the emperor Frederic, and diſpoſſeſſed him of his empire, on ſuſpicion of his having been dilatory in ſupply of the papal chair, and, to ſhew his own great authority now, he poſſeſſed it‖.

The fourteenth general council was held at Lions, A. D. 1274, for the relief of the Holy Land, for the reunion of the Greek church, and for the reforming the church diſcipline. In the fourth ſeſſion, the union of the Greek church was attempted, but on ſuch points of faith as were of an indeterminate nature, particularly relating to the Trinity, and the union propoſed could not be effected.

The fourteenth century further evinces, that the popes could not longer enjoy that vaſt degree of gran-

‡ Decretal, lib. iii. chap. 10.
* Laval's Preface to the Hiſtory of the Reformation in France.
‖ Henault's Hiſtory of France.

deur

deur to which they had aſpired, nor ſupport their intolerable uſurpation in quiet: their authority was often called in queſtion, till they were obliged to deſiſt in part from their pretenſions. Philip, king of France, gave ſeveral great blows to the papal authority; and from the enſuing ſchiſms of double elections, when the oppoſite factions choſe different popes at the ſame time, an occaſion was taken to bridle the popes authority, by calling councils, which often proceeded ſo far as to depoſe the holy fathers. To this may be added, that the tranſlation of the papal chair, by Clement V. from Rome to Avignon, where the popes conſtantly reſided for ſeventy years together, carried along with it ſeveral inconveniencies, which proved greatly prejudicial to the eccleſiaſtical monarchy. Among others, the popes authority being founded upon this belief, that St. Peter had been at Rome, and by his preſence had communicated a particular prerogative and holineſs to that chair, it was very much queſtioned whether the ſame could be transferred to Avignon *.

Boniface IX. was the firſt who exacted annates, i. e. one year's revenue of every biſhopric and abby, at each inſtallment †; had publiſhed a bull, and declared himſelf to be ſovereign lord, both in temporals and ſpirituals. King Philip of France burnt this bull, and ſent the following anſwer to the pope: "Philip, by "the grace of God, king of the Franks, to Boniface, "who ſets up for ſovereign pontiff, little or no health. "Be it known to your great extravagance, that we "are not ſubject to any perſon whatſoever as to what "regards temporals; that the collation of churches "and prebendſhips belongs to us by a royal right, and "that we have a power to appropriate the fruits of it "to ourſelves."

After the popes had aſſumed great part of the power to themſelves, of which they had ſtripped the emperor, John XXII. in the year 1316, made a decree,

* Puffendorff's Introduction to the Hiſtory of Europe.

† Dupin's Hiſt. ch. v. 4. p. 265.

that

that for three years, whoever obtained a benefice of more that twenty-four ducats of yearly rent, ſhould pay one year's value, for the expedition of his bull.

Some few years after the inſtitution, or reſervation of annates, king Edward, in the year 1373, ſent an ambaſſador to pope Gregory XI. then at Avignon, to preſs him to annul the reſervations entirely, which, after it had been in agitation, were the next year totally aboliſhed by this pope.

But a great ſchiſm ariſing in the church upon his death, which happened in the year 1378, and produced two popes, and conſequently two courts, the neceſſary expences to ſupport them were alſo doubled. Thus all inventions for fleecing the people were ſet on work with freſh vigour. Simony appeared no where ſo barefaced, the two courts holding an open market for benefices; and every eſſay was made that was poſſible to ſtrip the ordinary collators of the right of preſenting.

Hitherto the court of Rome had not taken off the maſk, nor had ſo avowedly owned that paſſion ſhe had for money; but pope Urban VI. left it no longer to conjecture, why he concerned himſelf with the collation of benefices, when he declared, that no preſentation ſhould be good, where the value was not expreſſed*.

By theſe methods the apoſtolic chamber came to a juſter knowledge of the value of the annates. This was thought by ſome to be no better than putting up the benefices to auction: but on the other hand, it was inſinuated, that it was only to prevent the holy chamber being defrauded of their right.

No body can deny, but that the diſorders were notorious in the Roman courts on this occaſion; and that many neighbouring kingdoms were ſo greatly alarmed and diſguſted at the variety of tricks and ſhifts they ſaw practiſed, that they came at laſt to acknowledge neither of the competitors for pope. Germany refuſed

* Father Paul.

to

to ſubmit to the reſervations. Innocent VII. ſent his legate into Germany, to grant new bulls for certain ſums to ſuch as had come in by epiſcopal collation, and to compound for the firſt fruits. But the emperor Charles IV. forbad the levying them, ſaying it was neceſſary to reform the manners of the clergy, but not their purſes.

Theſe confuſions received a conſiderable increaſe by the addition of a third pope, which, with the king of France's meaſures, will be related in the hiſtory of the next century.

Moreover, the Greek church, ſays Dupin, was diſturbed by frivolous queſtions; the order of franciſcan monks torn in pieces by odd opinions, and extravagant practices; diverſe errors taught by divines, condemned by the biſhops, or univerſities; and ſeveral diſorders ſuppreſſed by the inſtitutions of councils and biſhops. The divines which flouriſhed in this age, followed the methods of the ſchools, as their predeceſſors had done. The commentators upon holy ſcripture produced nothing great nor excellent; and the hiſtorians, nothing exact or perfect. But the ſtudy of the civil law, and the languages, acquired a great degree of perfection; and the love of certain profitable ſciences muſt be acknowledged to have prevailed in this century†. But it is likewiſe notorious, that the catholics have caſtrated many valuable books, and ſuppreſſed every thing that might ſerve for the defence of the temporal authority; and made ſuch alterations and additions to ſeveral books reprinted, as might beſt ſerve to promote the doctrines and practices of the church of Rome: an evident proof of their degeneracy and corruption‡.

This century is alſo remarkable for the oppoſition made in England to the groſſer errors of popery, by Wickliffe, and his adherents, of which we ſhall have occaſion to treat in another part of this work.

§ Father Paul, p. 184.
† Preface to Century XIV. Fol. Edit.
‡ See Father Paul of Benefices, p. 179.

The fifteenth general council was held at Vienna, 1311, for condemning the templars, and the extinction of their order.

With reſpect to offices and ceremonies, the plurality of benefices was commonly practiſed; the commendams of abbeys became very frequent; excommunications, and other eccleſiaſtical cenſures, were made uſe of to enforce the payment of tithes or tenth from the people, and to maintain the clergy in their immunities*, and the office of churchwardens firſt appointed.

Notwithſtanding the prohibition of the Lateran council, ſome new religious orders were eſtabliſhed, as the order of Jeſuits, afterwards confirmed by Urban V. 1367; the order of St. Saviour; the order of St. Ambroſe.

CENTURY THE FIFTEENTH.

The Fifteenth Century of the church is full of great tranſactions: the ſchiſm of the popes, which appeared at the beginning of it, was, for many years, the great care and buſineſs of the prelates and Chriſtian princes of the weſt; beſides this, the difference between the council of Baſil and pope Eugenius IV. and the project of the re-union of the Greeks to the Latin church, were the great concerns of Chriſtendom: but the former had not thoſe miſchievous conſequences which were feared, nor the latter the ſucceſs which was hoped for. Among many other remarkable events, the oppoſition made in ſeveral parts of Germany to the errors and enormities of the church of Rome had this tendency, to put men upon the ſtudy of uſeful learning, upon ſearching the ſcripture and tradition; and it obliged the prelates to labour after a reformation of the clergy, ſo generally and ſo juſtly complained of; as alſo to make many regulations in the diſcipline of the church; in which the church of France more particularly diſtin-

* Dupin's Hiſt. Ch. iv. p. 265.

guiſhed

guiſhed itſelf, and furniſhes us with the beſt part of the hiſtory of this century‖.

This ſchiſm is generally conſidered with regard to the meaſures they had taken, and the effects of them; the buſineſs of collation, of benefices, the reſervation of annates, &c. had very much incenſed ſome of the neighbouring princes, who were jealous of their ſubjects property. One of the firſt ſteps taken by the king of France was, his letters of ſubtraction, as they were called, which is a declaration of withdrawing from his obedience, publiſhed in the year 1408, which had a very good effect. But in the year 1409, a third pope was elected, to whom, though France paid obedience, yet ſhe ſtood firm in maintaining the king's edict by which all reſervations, annates, and other exactions of the court of Rome, were forbid, until they were ſettled by a lawful general council; and it happened at that time, that the parliament of Paris were in part compoſed of counſellors that were well eſtabliſhed in the eccleſiaſtical laws; and thoſe made a noble ſtand againſt the encroachments attempted to be made by the pope's eccleſiaſtical judges.

In the ſixteenth general council, held at Conſtance, the ſchiſm of the popes was extinguiſhed, by one of the popes having renounced, after he had fled from the council and been brought back again and depoſed, viz. John XXIII. And the two others having been depoſed, viz. Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII. in the year 1417. Martin V. was elected pope at the general council.

Great hopes were entertained, that the council and the pope together, the two moſt powerful concurrents upon earth, would ſet themſelves to reform the many abuſes that had crept into the church; and, indeed, the council recommended it to the pope: but from their deſire of returning home, and ſome difficulties which they found attended it, it was put off for a more convenient ſeaſon,

‖ Abſ. from the Preface of Monſ. Dupin, to Century XV.

under the direction of a future council; so that council terminated April 12, 1418 *.

But they first condemned the errors of John Huss and Wickliffe, and in which John Huss was condemned to be burnt.

The French not being willing to stay so long, a decree was made in the parliament of Paris, that no obedience should be paid to the pope, unless he first admitted, and acknowledged the king's edict †, which suppressed the reservations and exactions of money in France.

The pope, being apprized of this by his nuncios, agrees to it for that time; but having gained some members of the university to his party, in the year 1422, he again attempted to make the reservations: however, he failed in the attempt, and they proceeded to the imprisonment of all his adherents, the rector of the university, and divers others of the members and fellows; and upon the pope's putting the city of Lyons under interdiction, because that city obeyed the king's edict, the parliament strictly forbad their obedience to it.

This dispute lasted till the year 1424, when matters were compromized betwixt them; they had, as it were, divided the power, and the advantages: but it did not prove to the satisfaction of either parties, so it lasted but a little while. However, at the end of about seven years, Martin died, to whom succeeded Eugene IV. during whose popedom, in 1431, the council of Basil took in hand the reformation so necessary. All reservations were prohibited, except of those benefices which were vacant in curia, the annates, and many other exactions peculiar to that court.

The pope finding such a check given to his power, after many attempts to obtain an alteration, came to an open rupture with them. The pope dissolved the council—the council deprived the pope, and chose an-

* Father Paul of Benefices and Revenue, p. 196.

† Conference of Ordinances, lib. I. tit. iiii. p. 283.

other

other.—This bred another ſchiſm in the church.—France and Germany received the decrees of this council; and in the year 1438, the famous Pragmatic Sanction, which Mezeray calls the bulwark of the Gallican church, was publiſhed in France, which reſtored the elections to the chapters, the collations to the ordinaries, and aboliſhed the reſervations.

In this century, viz. at the council of Bourges, 1438, their decrees were principally taken out of thoſe of the council of Baſil: for when pope Eugenius uſed his utmoſt endeavours to diſſolve the council of Baſil, and to deſtroy its authority, the fathers of the council ſent their deputies into France to preſent the decrees and conſtitutions which they had made for the reformation of, eccleſiaſtical, diſcipline to Charles VII. and the church of France. The king, not willing to do any thing in a matter of that importance, immediately convened a council of biſhops to examine thoſe decrees. The reſult was, giving a blow to the ſupremacy, by that maxim, firſt reduced to practice by the councils of Piſa, Conſtance, and Baſil, and by the two laſt eſtabliſhed, as an article of faith, "That the pope is ſubject to a general council;" which doctrine proved the more fatal at Rome, as it has been received by the Gallican church as a mark of diſtinction.

But all the regulations made by them againſt thoſe innovations in their dominion, ſerved but to ſharpen the induſtry of the court of Rome, to find out other expedients which might prove effectual for theſe ends, under other pretexts, as well as to ſupply, by a multiplication of new rights, their defect of power in matters wherein the interpoſition of princes had reſtrained them.

It was about this time reſignations took place, it being never before allowed to churchmen to quit the cure that had been aſſigned them; and till now it was thought incumbent on the miniſter, who had undertaken a charge, and received a recompence for it, that he ſhould continue to perform it to the end of his life: but however, this being permitted and encouraged, it turned to the advantage of the court of Rome, as it made

the more frequent, and enlarged the ſum ariſing from annates.

When the reſources of this kind began to dry up, indulgences and remiſſion of ſins were thought of in their room, to be beſtowed on ſuch perſons who ſhould contribute money for the holy war, or any other pious uſes: and this matter was carried ſo high, that every one knows, that the changes, that were made in conſequence of thoſe indulgences, in Germany and many other parts of Europe, and which commenced pretty early in the next century, make no ſmall part of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory.

In Italy, where the council of Baſil never was received, and the adherence to the pope was more ſtrong, the reſervations had taken deeper root, every pope renewing them with eaſe, and introducing new pretenſions and impoſitions, and ſhewing no inſtance of mitigation in the rigour of any of them, except where ſome expedient had been found to work the ſame effect an eaſier way.

In Germany, where the council of Baſil was by ſome admitted, by others not, there was great diverſity in the deciſions concerning beneficiary cauſes. To provide againſt and reconcile theſe differences, Nich. V. and the emperor Frederic III. in the year 1448, made a concordat, concluded in the pope's name, to the following tenor: — That the benefices vacant in court ſhould be reſerved to the pope, and that the reſt of the elective benefices ſhould go by election *.

In France there were warm diſputes ſubſiſting for a conſiderable time, ſometimes the pope ſeeming to get the better in the controverſy, and ſometimes the king of France.

At length Leo X. framed a concordat with king Francis I. of France, that the pragmatic ſanction ſhould be aboliſhed, and the election of biſhops and abbots ſhould be taken from the cathedral and collegiate

* Father Paul of Beneficiary Matters, p. 206.

giate churches, and given to the king, who was to name a fit perſon, and the pope to confer the benefice; it was farther concluded, that the pope could not give expectatives, nor make any reſervations, general or ſpecial: though there was great difficulty in getting this concordat to be received, the univerſity appealing to a general council lawfully convened, yet the king's authority and intereſt prevailed, and it was put in execution throughout.

Thus, after ſeveral popes, had between 1076 and 1150, thundered out ſo many excommunications, and occaſioned much rebellion and bloodſhed, in order to wreſt from princes the collation of biſhoprics, and to give the election to the chapters: on the contrary, the quarrel ſeems now inverted, and Pius II. and five of his ſucceſſors have, with the ſame zeal and conſtancy, been ſtruggling to take the election from the chapter, and give it to the king, which Leo the Tenth at laſt accompliſhed: ſo true it is, that a change in intereſts draws along with it both a change, and even a contradiction, in doctrines.

In a council held at Rouen, 1445, we have forty conſtitutions chiefly relating to the diſcipline of that church: there is one of them againſt the ſuperſtition of thoſe who gave particular names to the images of the Virgin, ſuch as our lady of recovery, our lady of pity, conſolation and grace: — they forbid the carrying about the relics of ſaints in order to get money: clandeſtine marriages were likewiſe prohibited: others related to the morals and habits of eccleſiaſtics, the celebration of holy days, the payment of tenths, ornaments of churches, &c. Theſe regulations are taken from the councils of Baſil, Lateran, the pragmatic ſanction, decretals, and other provincial councils *.

The feaſts of the Virgin's conception and of our Lord's transfiguration were inſtituted by Calixtus III. 1456 †: — the taking away the chalice was done by

* Dupin's Hiſtory of the Church, vol. iii. p. 300.
† Dupin.

the council of Conſtance, A. D. 1420 §; — the ſacraments fixed to the number of ſeven in the council of Florence, 1439 ‖, — and the order of templars aboliſhed ‖ ‖.

CENTURY THE SIXTEENTH.

M. Dupin in (the preface to) his hiſtory of the ſixteenth century obſerves, that the eccleſiaſtical hiſtory of this age deſerves the particular attention of all who have any concern for religion, there being no century in which there have been greater revolutions in the church. — The pope of Rome ſaw, with grief, a great part of Europe forſake their allegiance to his holineſs; ſeveral provinces of Germany, England, and Scotland, and ſeveral kingdoms of the North, were departed from his authority; and France, which till then had been free from ſuch monſters, as he calls them *, produced ſome who were not leſs hurtful to the ſtate than to the church:—"But, ſays he," "if the church catholic loſt a good deal of its extent this way, it endeavoured to recompence the loſs in ſome ſort, by the reformation of manners and diſcipline, putting a ſtop to the licenſing clandeſtine marriages, and by puniſhing ſcandalous crimes, according to the rights of the eccleſiaſtical laws. For this purpoſe ſo many decrees and regulations were made in eccleſiaſtical aſſemblies, and eſpecially in the council of Trent, which, Dupin likewiſe, tells us, were to condemn errors to preſerve the purity of the faith, and to labour after the reformation of diſcipline.

Father Walch has given us a more particular, and I preſume impartial, view of this remarkable period. — He ſays, That in the firſt part of it, the internal corruption of the church of Rome was

§ Laval's Hiſtory of the Reformation in France.
‖ Freeman.
‖ ‖ Dupin.
* Allowance muſt here be made for the religious tenets of this author. I have therefore made ſome variations.

become

become ſuch, as to exclude all external order and decency: --- in the middle it received ſuch a ſhock, as it had never before felt, by the amazing progreſs of the reformation; and the latter part of this period was employed in preſerving the wreck, and reſtoring, or recovering, what had been loſt. This has been attended with many remarkable conſequences, ſome of which follow.

As to the ſpiritual monarchy of the pope, it was at firſt greatly endangered by thoſe who bore teſtimony to the truth, in ſpite of the baſe example of pope Pius II. and particularly by the proceedings of king Lewis XII. of France, and of the council of Piſa againſt pope Julius II.

But the advantage became irreparable, when gradually a conſiderable part of Germany, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Hungary, and Poland, beſides all England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, and Pruſſia, received the doctrine of the reformation, and withdrew entirely from their obedience to the ſee of Rome.---Beſides this, thoſe nations, which ſtill adhered to the doctrine of the church of Rome, not only admitted principles quite irreconcilable with the doctrine of an infallible head of the whole church, but alſo particularly, by the frequent complaints againſt the ſee of Rome, and their earneſt ſolicitations for a council, threatened it with no ſmall danger; and Charles V. was even actually employed, at leaſt in Germany, in deciding religious points judicially.

Adrian VI. in 1522, ſent a letter to the duke of Saxony and other princes, to extirpate the heretics, the Lutherans, by fire and ſword, notwithſtanding he confeſſed to them, that there were great abuſes in the church of Rome, and that the eccleſiaſtics themſelves ſtood greatly in need of reformation: and even while the council of Trent were convened 1546, and denouncing their anathemas againſt the proteſtants, the pope and emperor prepared another ſort of arms againſt them, in order to deſtroy their lives, as the ſureſt means

to

to ſuppreſs hereſy: but in this the emperor was too politic for the pope, for he took care to ſell ſome of the churches patrimony to defray the expence.

All this incited the ſee of Rome to ſtudy expedients for the better ſupport of the Roman catholic religion, and more eſpecially of the authority of the pope, and to ſecure it from further declenſion. About this time the order of Jeſuits, by the approbation and confirmation of the pope, received its entire eſtabliſhment, and became a pillar, of which the papacy ſtood greatly in need, in 1540.

The council of Trent was very artfully made uſe of to anſwer theſe ends, quite contrary to its original deſign. The Roman legates were ſuffered to preſide in it, and they had not the liberty of agreeing to the opinions, or reſolutions, of the fathers, without the previous conſent of the pope. All the doctrines, which contradicted the Romiſh errors, were condemned without hearing the proteſtants; and all the doctrines, peculiar to the church of Rome, were ſolemnly confirmed; a majority of votes was influenced to ſuppreſs the doctrines aſſented to by the greateſt part of the doctors then preſent, or they were decided by an authoritative ſentence from Rome, if they had the leaſt tendency to the prejudice of the papal court: thoſe queſtions, for inſtance, ſo fruitful in altercation, whether epiſcopacy be of divine original, and whether the pope was to be accounted the head of all churches, or of the univerſal church, were concluded in the affirmative without debate; and the papal court reſerved and confirmed to itſelf, the amendment of its own abuſes; and in the laſt place, it was deemed the prerogative of the pope to interpret all the decrees; and it muſt be owned, that theſe methods had their * deſired effect in thoſe provinces where the decrees of this council were accepted without limitation: but the pope had the mor-

* Walch's Hiſtory of the Popes, p. 272. See Remarks on the twenty-fourth Article of Pope Pius IV's Creed, by Burroughs.

tification to find that whole nations, eſpecially France, Spain, and Hungary, either abſolutely refuſed their compliance, or by their exceptions, or reſervations, plainly ſhewed, that their oppoſition aroſe from the very doctrine therein contained of the ſupremacy of the pope: and hence, that very important diſtinction betwixt the *perfectly* and *partially* obedient ſons of the holy father.

Council of Trent, 1545. Paul III. Pope.

As we ſhall have further occaſion to treat of the authority, the deciſions, and decrees, of this great aſſembly, relating to points of doctrine, diſcipline, and ceremonies of the Roman church; a ſhort account of the ſeveral ſeſſions will be ſufficient in this place *.

The pattern or method of proceeding in the council of Trent was taken from the latter occidental councils, and eſpecially from the laſt council of Lateran, by having the ſeveral matters and things laid before ſeveral perſons appointed, which were denominated particular congregations; and then it was reported to the general aſſembly of biſhops: and this was done with great ceremony, and the decrees read at the concluſion by one of them, each of the other ſignifying his ſentiments, by ſaying *placet*, or *non placet*. — We likewiſe find, that many of the biſhops met with a deſign to eſtabliſh the ſuperiority of the church, and general councils over the pope; to promote a reformation in the church; and likewiſe with moderate diſpoſitions towards ſuch as might differ from them in ſentiments, and recommended to their collegues humility and charity: but this will not hold true of the majority: the pope's legates were preſent, and had an undue influence, as will appear in the ſequel. --- One inſtance appeared even in the ſecond ſeſſion, when many of the council were for opening that ſeſſion, with ſome propoſals for a general reformation; but the pope's legates oppoſed it, and after ſome

* An abſtract from Dr. Jurieu's Hiſtory of the Council of Trent, and Father Paul's Hiſtory in folio.

debate

debate, cardinal Pool obtained, as a proper expedient, that the ſymbol of the Nicene, or creed of the church of Rome, ſhould be confirmed; ſome made a jeſt of that, as it had been received in the church for twelve hundred years; however, the more penetrating ſaw through the policy of that ſcheme, viz. that nothing might afterwards be propoſed in oppoſition to it.--- The third ſeſſion was principally taken up with the progreſs that the reformation made in Germany; the elector Palatine having re-eſtabliſhed the communion under both kinds, the marriage of prieſts, and the ſervice in the vulgar tongue; which gave great offence to the pope's legates. --- In the fourth ſeſſion, purſuant to the order given by the pope, they proceeded to take under their conſideration the *ſcriptures.* This was reduced to four heads, chiefly relative to ſuch points as were intended to be condemned in the proteſtants, viz. the ſufficiency of holy ſcripture, and the neceſſity of traditions; the ſecond, of the canonical books and their number; the third was about the authority of the vulgar tranſlation, and the neceſſity of having recourſe to the originals; and the fourth related to the proper interpreters of ſcripture: and it was concluded, that all matters and things condemned ſhould be by Anathema.

In the fourth ſeſſion they alſo entered upon the doctrine of original ſin, to which there was a great oppoſition: they diſcuſſed ſome of the ſubtleties of that queſtion, as, How Adam's ſin, which conſiſted in the tranſgreſſion of a law, could be conveyed or tranſmitted to his poſterity? and nine articles of the Zuinglans were condemned as not expreſſive, or conſiſtent, with the doctrine of original ſin, though they admitted a depravity or corruption of nature. The prelates diſpute much, but appear to be ignorant of the point, or the arguments, of the Zuinglans. This introduced a diſpute concerning the immaculate conception of the Bleſſed Virgin. --- The fifth ſeſſion related to preachers, in which the mendicant monks took poſſeſſion of the pul-

pits, but reſidencies enjoined upon them. --- In the ſixth ſeſſion the ſubjects of grace and juſtification, in which the point of abſolute predeſtination, final perſeverance, and the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt, were taken into their conſideration; and at length the decrees were made with great ambiguity, and with ſuch proviſoes, as permitted the pope, or the church, finally to determine it. --- In the ſeventh ſeſſion the council diſcuſſed the points of baptiſm and extreme unction: their ordinances on theſe points were merely trifling, notwithſtanding they beſtowed anathema's on ſuch who did not deem them ſacred; ſome abuſes from plurality of benefices were mentioned, but it terminated in the authority of diſpenſations. --- The eighth ſeſſion was concerning the removal of the council to Bologna, which paſſed in the affirmative.

The ninth ſeſſion, and firſt of Bologna, ſettled only the formularies of the aſſembly. In 1547, a diet at Augſburg was held, in which they promiſed to ſubmit to that council; nevertheleſs, when the council did not coincide with their principles, they acted in oppoſition it, more from policy than regard to truth, and though much in favour of proteſtants, and liberty of conſcience, was not regarded by many of them as ſubſtantial and laſting.

In 1549 pope Paul died. Julius III. ſucceeded him, who was prevailed on, by the emperor, to re-eſtabliſh the council at Trent, wherein the emperor was to preſide, and the proteſtants of Augſbug have free liberty to be heard concerning the points of faith in which they differed from the church of Rome: but we meet with no ſuch happy conſequences ariſing from it, neither in the eleventh nor twelfth ſeſſion. However, in the thirteenth ſeſſion, the council enters upon buſineſs, chuſes the point of the euchariſt for doctrine, and the juriſdiction of biſhops for reformation; the firſt of theſe was debated for ſome time: at length, decreed, that communion in one kind was ſufficient, and pronounced

anathemas

anathema's againſt ſuch as denied the real preſence, tranſubſtantiation, the adoration, of the hoſt, &c.

In 1521 was held the congregation, conſiſting only of doctors of the canon law, for handling the matter of diſcipline, which is the original of the juriſdiction of the tribunals of the church. This congregation was held at Trent, but did not interfere with the council of prelates. Gropper votes for the aboliſhing an eccleſiaſtical tribunal, and wrote againſt it. This introduced the original of degradations, &c.

The thirteenth ſeſſion of the council of Trent confirmed the decrees and anathemas of the council, in the former ſeſſion, againſt thoſe who denied the communion in one kind, the real preſence, &c. Penance, extreme unction, and the reformation in favour of the epiſcopal juriſdiction, were points determined; but they could not agree with reſpect to decrees, which were therefore referred to ſome future time; afterwards was re-aſſumed in the third convocation of the council under pope Pius IV.

The fourteenth ſeſſion, the council refuſe to hear the proteſtants, notwithſtanding the emperor's promiſe; however, a new, ſafe conduct was obtained for ſome of the proteſtants of Wirtenberg and Bohemia, and audience was given to the ambaſſadors of Saxony, which principally engaged the attention of the council the fifteenth, ſixteenth, ſeventeenth, and eighteenth ſeſſions: however. in Auguſt, 1552, the landgrave of Heſſe was enlarged, liberty of conſcience granted under certain reſtrictions, and baniſhed miniſters recalled.

In 1553, another remarkable event intervened. Edward VI. king of England died, July 6, and Mary, his ſiſter, ſucceeded to the throne, who pretended at firſt, that ſhe would alter nothing in religion, though ſhe was a Roman catholic; but this promiſe was ſoon counteracted by her attempts to introduce the Roman catholic religion into theſe kingdoms.

In 1555, a diet was called at Augſburg, for compoſing the troubles in religion, during which the pope

died.

died. Paul IV. ſucceeded him, whoſe character was that of proud and inſolent. The diet made a decree in favour of liberty of conſcience, which ſo diſpleaſed the pope, that he liſtened to the perſuaſions of ſome, to ſupport his authority by the ſword; but party quarrels with princes ſeem to have diverted him from the intention he had formed.

In 1558, Mary, queen of England, died, and her ſiſter, Elizabeth. ſucceeded, which was looked upon as a mortal blow to the ſee of Rome. She thought it to no purpoſe to diſſemble, with reſpect to her principles; and therefore ſent advice to her ſiſters ambaſſador at Rome, and ordered him to acquaint the pope of her advancement to the throne. The pope anſwered, that ſhe had been very bold to take the crown and name of queen without his leave.

In 1561, the pope, by his bull, invites not only catholic but proteſtant princes to the council of Trent, and diſpatches the abbot Martimengo to the queen of England; but, as ſoon as it was known to her, ſhe forbad him to enter her dominions. A conference was likewiſe appointed at Poiſſy, between the Roman catholics and the proteſtants. The council at Trent met in 1562, called the ſeventeenth ſeſſion, or the firſt of the third convocation, in which the books written in ſupport of hereſy, as they termed it, were ordered to be ſuppreſſed, and an edict publiſhed for the ſafe conduct of the German proteſtants. In the eighteenth ſeſſion, they enter upon the point of the reſidence of biſhops, and the queſtion, If it be of divine right? was ſtarted and argued with great warmth, which laſted the nineteenth ſeſſion. In the twentieth, they reaſſumed the diſpute of communion in both kinds, and concluded it again in the negative; and it was confirmed in the twenty-firſt ſeſſion, then the matter of the ſacrafice of the maſs was choſen for their deliberation. This head was divided into thirteen articles, wherein were comprehended all the controverſies about that ſubject, which are at this day argued between the church of Rome

Rome and the proteſtants, viz. Whether the maſs be a propitiatory ſacrifice? Whether it derogates from the ſacrifice of Jeſus Chriſt? Whether Jeſus Chriſt, by ſaying, *Do this*, hath appointed the ſacrifice of his body? Whether private maſſes be lawful and good? Whether it be lawful to celebrate maſſes in honour of ſaints? Whether the ceremonies of the maſs are good and holy? Whether there be errors in the canon of the maſs? Whether the words of conſecration ought to be pronounced with a low voice? with other queſtions of little importance.

The French ſtayed at the council with very little ſatisfaction; for they ſaw that matters of the higheſt moment were determined with very little regard to the prelates of their nation, and by the Spaniſh, Portugueſe, and Italian biſhops, and that all propoſals to a reformation were over-ruled by a number of penſionary biſhops, aſſerting, that the court of Rome was miſtreſs of all deliberations, as well as propoſitions: ſo that the giving or with-holding the cup from the laity was referred to the deciſion of the pope.

The twenty-ſecond ſeſſion affords us further proof, that the biſhops were ill ſatisfied of the infallibility of the council; and the ambaſſadors of France received new orders from their court, for aſſerting their diſapprobation of the meaſures taken by the council. The ſacrament of orders was handled, and whether the Holy Ghoſt be given in ordination; which was determined in the affirmative. The Germans queſtion the divine right of epiſcopacy, which occaſioned very warm debates.

The French begin the new year, 1563, with thirty-four new demands, relating to abuſes, which greatly alarmed the pope when communicated to him. A decree is ſent from Rome concerning the pope's authority, which met with much contradiction. They likewiſe debated the ſubject of marriages and divorce, and of the celibacy of prieſts; wherein it was concluded, that it could not be ſaid, without hereſy, that

that a prieſt could marry notwithſtanding their vow. The pope, much diſſatisfied with the conduct of ſome of the French, ordered the tribunal of the inquiſition to proceed againſt them.

The twenty-third and twenty-fourth ſeſſion turned upon ſome difference that had ariſen between the pope and the king of France, and with the queen of Navarre, on the ſuſpicion of hereſy.

The twenty-fifth and laſt ſeſſion of this council, held Dec. 3, 1563, the prelates and ambaſſadors went to church with the uſual ceremonies, when Jerome Ragazzone, titular biſhop of Nazianzo, made a ſermon in praiſe of the council, recapitulated the good laws and ordinances which were made in it, and read the decrees concerning purgatory, the interceſſion and invocation of ſaints, images, and their worſhip; they alſo read the decree for reformation of monks, containing twenty chapters, and one was added to ſhield the pope's authority, and to leave him in full liberty to diſpenſe with all the canons. --- The ſecond day they alſo read the decrees concerning indulgences, the choice of meats, faſts, and holy days; they made an act of reference to the pope about the index expurgatorius, miſſals, breviaries, ceremonials, and the care of making a catechiſm.

This laſt ſeſſion of the council gave as little ſatisfaction as the reſt had done; for after all the fair promiſes of ſetting about a reformation, there was nothing of importance effected, except ſome regulations that properly belonged to civil government. Germany ſlighted the council to the higheſt degree; for the prelates of this nation had not been preſent in the laſt convocation; very few biſhops from Hungary or Poland; none at all from England, Swedeland, Denmark, or the Low Countries; the French biſhops came only at the latter end; and including the Spaniards, they did not exceed the number of forty: all the reſt were Italians, to the number of 150, and therefore it had the name of the Council of the Pope and the Italians. The pope, on

the 26th of December, gave the bull of confirmation, wherein he forbids, under pain of excommunication, the publiſhing of any commentaries, or obſervations, upon the councils, ordaining, in all doubtful caſes, recourſe to be had to the holy ſee.

What regard was paid to this council by the French, is evident from the following citation: for, at the cloſing of the council of Trent, Du Ferrier, the king's ambaſſador, entered his proteſt againſt every thing of a civil nature, that had been tranſacted in that aſſembly. We find, by a letter of John de Mervilliers to his nephew, the biſhop of Rennes, ambaſſador to the court of Vienna, dated from Fontainebleau the third of March, that "As ſoon as the cardinal was returned from the council, the preſidents of the parliament and the king's council, were ſummoned to court to ſee the decrees and acts of that aſſembly; and the matter being debated, the attorney general ſaid, That with regard to the doctrine, the parliament did not intend to meddle with it, but held every thing as ſound and orthodox, that was determined in a general and lawful council: but, as for the decrees of diſcipline and reformation, they had found in ſeveral things, derogatory to the rights and privileges of the Gallican church, and therefore to be rejected *."

Further means for promoting the grand point of the pope's ſupremacy, were the inquiſition of Italy, the Jeſuits, the Miſſions prohibiting books, and other meaſures to diveſt all temporal ſovereigns from any juriſdiction in ſpiritual affairs. --- Theſe things ſufficiently ſhew the pope's deſign to erect an univerſal ſupremacy; yet, in the exerciſe of it; the pope's hands have been tied by the cardinals and congregations. --- This power ſeemed to increaſe, and the popes became more and more ſhackled, which no pope better underſtood than Sixtus V. who firſt conceived that proteſtantiſm might accidentally be turned to the advantage of the pope; but this project was defeated by the general conſtitution of Europe, the pragmatic ſanction.

* Henault, abridged by Nugent, p. i. p. 416.

CEN-

CENTURY THE SEVENTEENTH.

In this century we find the popes have been more concerned for the preſervation than the increaſe of their power and authority, and they ſeem to have been thoroughly ſenſible of the neceſſity of ſuch conduct.

Their ſpiritual monarchy, in its external limits, has, doubtleſs, been rather contracted then extended, though the perſecutions of the proteſtants in Germany, Hungary, and France, have not indeed been totally without effect. The ſeveral acceſſions of great princes to the church of Rome have not been detrimental to the pope; and the miſſions, among the heathens and Eaſtern nations, have unqueſtionably contributed ſomething to the propagation of the Romiſh faith.

But it would be no difficulty to ſhew, that all theſe means have been far from anſwering their end in the manner expected; that the endeavours uſed for bringing back the proteſtants under the old yoke, eſpecially in England, have miſcarried; that the proteſtants, by a cloſer union, and the progreſſive increaſe of their power, have gradually, in effect, weakened Roman catholic houſes; and the propagation of popery has been not a little reſtrained by public laws *.

It is only in the writings of the bigots of Rome, and in the proſſeſſorial chains of the Jeſuits, that the inward conſtitution of this ſupremacy remains unaltered; for if, inſtead of looking into the Roman catechiſm for what ought to take place, we conſider the actual ſtate of things, we muſt admit the obſervation of Monſieur Voltaire, though made ſome time ſince, "That in the opinion of the great, at leaſt, the infallibility of the pope, with the power founded in it, is a chimera, not believed even at Rome, and yet

* An Abſtract from Walch's Hiſtory of Papacy. See alſo Brandt's Hiſtory of the Reformation in the Low Countries, and Laval's Hiſtory of the Reformation in France.

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maintained; and the pope, a ſacred perſon, whoſe feet are to be kiſſed, but his hands bound †.

The juſtice of this idea of the pope and his infallibility appears from all the tranſactions with the crowns of France, Spain, Sardinia, Naples, the republic of Venice, and even the houſe of Auſtria.

It is ſtill more evident, that in church affairs, and even in caſes relating to the perſons of eccleſiaſtics and church-lands, the temporal princes and ſtates have diſcovered and aſſerted their ancient rights; that in France thoſe obnoxious decrees of the councils of Conſtance and Baſil have not been admitted as articles of faith; that the papal bulls are no further ſubmitted to, than as they correſpond with the prevailing maxims of the ſtate; that, on theſe accounts, the popes are very cautious of hazarding a deciſion in doctrinal controverſies; that none prove more refractory ſons of the Roman father than the Jeſuits, when his will and their's happen to claſh.

Of late the pope has not been allowed to make any new conqueſt. Caſtro, Renciglione, Comacchio, Parma, and Placentia, are clear proofs that it was never imagined the ſucceſſors of St. Peter were to bring armies into the field; and the forwardneſs of any to make good their pretenſions that way, of which there have been too many inſtances, is looked upon as a diſgrace to the character of a pope.

The elections of popes are more and more carried on by intrigue, but, at the ſame time, more and more corrupt: the principal authority and influence of the pope ſeem rather to unite or center in the courts

† Walch, before cited, p. 298, who adds by way of note—The pretended belief of this article at Rome, may be ſeen in Blanchi's Treatiſe Della Poteſta e della Politia della Chieſa, written in oppoſition to that friend of liberty, Giannoni. There is alſo a work, lately drawn up by the inquiſition, concerning papal power, to depoſe kings, or diſcharge their ſubjects, from their oath of allegiance; which piece would probably have met with a better reception in the twelfth century. See Voltaire's Siecle de Louis XIV.

of

of Madrid and Rome, than at Verſailles or any other court.

With reſpect to doctrine and ceremonies, notwithſtanding the council of Trent adjuſted matters of this nature, for the moſt part, not only by decrees of the council, but in all difficult matters referred to the future deciſion of the pope; yet we find, very early in this century, many diſputes were agitated, viz. The controverſy concerning grace and free-will, held at Louvain before Clement VIII. and Paul V. the pope publiſhed a decree in 1611, by which he ordered, that nothing ſhould be publiſhed, relating to theſe matters, upon any pretence whatſoever. This decree was renewed by Urban VIII. 1625, but thoſe prohibitions had no effect; for there appeared a variety of treatiſes of both ſides upon theſe matters.

Another diſpute was revived concerning eccleſiaſtical and political authority. This was chiefly managed between the lawyers and the divines. It was occaſioned by the pope's interdict of the republic of Venice, and was calculated to maintain, on one hand, the authority of the ſenate, to make ſuch laws as concerned the civil ſtate of that republic; and that the pope had no right to publiſh an interdict on that account. This diſpute terminated in favour of the rights of princes, in oppoſition to the pretended authority of the pope.

Janſeniſm prevailed greatly in France about the middle of this century, which occaſioned three aſſemblies of the clergy at Paris, in 1653, 1654, and 1655, who drew up a formulary, in order to terminate the diſpute, which was confirmed by the king's mandamus.

Another diſpute in this century was concerning the frequency of receiving the communion, which was managed with ſome warmth, but admitted of no ſatisfactory deciſion.

But a controverſy of more importance took place about the year 1680, between the clergy of France

and the court of Rome, about the regale. The regale is a right, by which the king enjoys the revenues of the archbiſhoprics and biſhoprics of the kingdom, and confers benefices during the vacancy of the ſees, till ſuch time as the incumbent has taken the oath of allegiance; and this the king claimed as a right that did belong to him univerſally throughout his dominion, except two or three provinces. Pope Innocent XI. ſeemed determined to oppoſe his claim: at length, in 1681, was held a national council, or general council of the clergy, to regulate this diſpute, who acknowledged his majeſty's right of the regale over all churches of the kingdom, and compriſed the whole matter in four articles: 1. That kings and princes are not ſubject to the eccleſiaſtical power, as to their temporals. 2. That the decrees of the council of Conſtance, concerning the authority of general councils, ought to remain in full force and virtue. 3. That the uſe of eccleſiaſtical power ought to be moderated by the canons. 4. That, although the ſovereign pontiff has the firſt place in matters of faith, though his decrees regard all churches, and each church in particular, yet his judgment is not infallible, unleſs it be followed by the conſent of the church.*

CENTURY THE EIGHTEENTH.

The hiſtory of this century we ſhall attempt in a general way, by enquiring a little further into the nature of the papal power, the prerogatives and influence of this ſpiritual monarchy, as it was exerciſed immediately preceding the reformation, and which the preſent principles of that church direct and countenance them in the exerciſe of.

If we conſider, that the popes riſe to that dignity from very inferior ſtations, were heretofore frequently, and are ſtill ſometimes, of mean families, without any

* See a larger Account of theſe Matters, Dupin, Cent. xvii.

ſupport

ſupport from kindred or relations, deriving a great part of their revenues from the ſubjects of other princes, and this in virtue of their claiming a greater ſhare in their allegiance, exerciſing an authority grounded only in opinion, and frequently aſſuming a ſuperiority over thoſe, to whom they have not been themſelves in obedience; when this is duly conſidered, we cannot help wondering, that this eccleſiaſtical empire has ſtood ſo long, grown up to ſo great a height, and continues yet to enjoy a green old age, that does not ſeem to betray any ſymptoms of a ſpeedy diſſolution.

But, upon a nearer and cloſer inſpection, we ſhall find, that this ſpiritual monarchy, like ſome of the leaning towers that have been ſo famous in hiſtory, tho' it ſeems to carry evident marks of weakneſs, is, in fact, a ſtructure very ſtrong in itſelf, contrived with great ſkill, as well as erected with much art. If in other monarchies princes have pretended to a divine right, the pope goes ſtill further, and claims a kind of divine power, by which he is raiſed as much above other princes, as thoſe princes are above their people. This claim, together with the title of Holineſs, having the recommendation of a long preſcription, cannot but excite an high veneration in the minds of ſuch as believe it, the papal character being given with the greateſt ceremony, by thoſe who are preſumed to be the beſt judges of religion; and the religious intereſt ſeem, in the opinion of the multitude, to alter the very nature of him who is adorned therewith, and to transform him, from a man of like paſſions with themſelves, into a ſacred perſon. It is true, that, in proteſtant countries, as nothing of this is believed, ſo it is very hard to be underſtood; yet the fact is beyond diſpute: and, whatever wiſer perſons in popiſh kingdoms may conceive, the bulk of the people have the higheſt reverence for the holy father.

The cloſe connection between the clergy in all popiſh countries and the court of Rome, joined to the occaſional benefits that monarchs themſelves may receive by

bulls from the holy ſee, makes them unwilling to interpoſe or break off that commerce which their ſubjects have with Rome, that, upon certain occaſions, they may derive favours from thence, which may eaſily procure what otherwiſe might with difficulty be obtained by their own authority. The ſubjection of the clergy to a foreign head, makes them ſometimes more tractable to their natural ſovereigns than they otherwiſe would be, ſince the good-will and friendſhip of a ſingle perſon is more eaſily attained than the direction of many; and beſides, in thoſe caſes, there can be no appeal to the people; becauſe, in all ſuch diſputes, they think an entire ſubmiſſion the duty of the clergy. We may add to this another reaſon, which is, that the popiſh princes cheriſh the ſpiritual power of the pope, as the means of preſerving unity in religious diſputes, which very ſeldom diſturb the church without diſturbing the ſtate alſo. Thus it appears that, independent of enthuſiaſm and ſuperſtition, political principles have no ſmall ſhare in promoting that adherence to the ſee of Rome, which, at firſt ſight, ſeems ſo irreconcilable to the abſolute authority of ſovereign princes, and which, notwithſtanding, by their dexterous management, is often made to co-operate therewith.

As to the interior ſtrength of the papal government, we need only reflect, that the advantages of birth are well ſupplied by the great parts, and other qualifications, with which a man muſt be neceſſarily endowed, who is promoted to this dignity. His being obliged to celibacy is another point of great conſequence, inaſmuch as it prevents the changing this elective into an hereditary ſovereignty, which would be entirely repugnant to the fundamental maxims of this conſtitution. We may add to this, the precautions taken in electing a perſon far advanced in years, which leaves no room for attempting to alter the ſettled principles of the government; and all great politicians allow, that it is the ſacrificing theſe to the intereſt of a family, or to the private advantage of the reigning prince, that opens a

way

way to the ruin of the beſt-digeſted ſyſtems. It has alſo been an old rule in the conclave, never to elect two popes of the ſame family or faction, or even of the ſame diſpoſition, in immediate ſucceſſion, for the ſame reaſon. In ſhort, it would be endleſs to enumerate particulars; but the character of the church of Rome, in reſpect to policy, has always ſtood ſo high, as to be thought the beſt ſchool for training miniſters in all the popiſh monarchies, from whence alſo it draws great advantages.

We muſt not, however, imagine from hence, that becauſe the fundamental maxims of the ſee of Rome have been always the ſame, the adminiſtration of the government has been exactly uniform, ſince, conſidering the vaſt variations in mens temper's and habits in different ages, this muſt appear a thing abſolutely impoſſible: neither ought we to imagine, that any conſtitution could be ſo framed, as to extinguiſh in the minds of princes all natural regard to their families: but on the one hand, ſuch has been the ſkill and capacity of theſe ſpiritual monarchs, that from time to time they have made ſuch prudent alterations in their exterior conduct, as hath perfectly kept up that relation between the church and the court of Rome, upon which their authority depends: they have likewiſe, on the other, reduced their family tenderneſſes into a kind of ſyſtem, by which the nepotiſm of the Roman pontiffs has been in many reigns ſubſervient to the intereſt of the ſtate, as well as agreeable to the inclination of the popes, who thought they could never truſt their affairs in ſo ſafe hands for themſelves, as with thoſe who muſt be conſcious, that their wealth, their influence, and their power, muſt, in a great meaſure, determine with the life of him from whom they were received, and that, beſides, they muſt, from that moment, lie open to the ſtricteſt enquiries poſſible into their paſt conduct.

One may, with great truth and impartiality, venture to aſſert, that the whole ſcheme of the Romiſh religion

is admirably well adjuſted to maintain, in every reſpect, the power of the ſupreme head: he is reputed infallible, that his deciſions may have the greater weight: the traditions of the church, which, with the members of it, paſs for a rule of faith, are ſubject to his controul; all religious doctrines are liable to his cenſure; the power of abſolution, even in the higheſt caſes, is attributed to him; he diſpenſes the treaſures of the church, I mean ſpiritual treaſures, ſuch as pardons and indulgences; he grants diſpenſations of all kinds; he regulates faſts and feaſts at his pleaſure: in a word, being reputed the ſucceſſor of St. Peter, and the viſible head of the Chriſtian church, he has prerogatives without bounds, and without number; ſo that it is no ſurpriſing thing at all, that ſo much power, directed by ſo great policy, ſhould be able to perform ſuch mighty things, and to preſerve itſelf for ſo many ages.

But our eſtimate of this power would be extremely imperfect, if we did not take notice of the ſeveral ranks and orders of men ſubject, in an eſpecial manner, to the holy ſee; and which, without any great impropriety in the term, may be ſtyled the ſpiritual forces of his holineſs. In the firſt claſs of theſe ſtand the cardinals, who are acknowledged princes of the church, and pretend to the next in dignity to crowned heads; they were originally no more than the pariſh prieſts of Rome, and their number ſometimes greater, ſometimes leſs; but now it is fixed to ſeventy-two, in alluſion to Chriſt's diſciples: heretofore a cardinal was content to be ſtyled his excellency; but now they aſſume the title of eminence, which was formerly given to princes, and thereupon the latter took the title of highneſs; the cardinals are of all nations, that the influence ariſing from the hopes of this dignity may be the more extenſive: the nomination to hats by crowned heads is a new ſtroke of Romiſh policy, which heightens the dependence upon the holy ſee, while it ſeems to leſſen the papal authority; the majority, however, are chiefly Italians, to prevent the throne from being filled by a ſtranger; and it is provided,

vided, that in all elections the perſon choſen ſhall have the voices of two thirds of thoſe who enter the conclave, that there may never be a ſtrong faction againſt the pope amongſt the cardinals, which might be attended with ill conſequences. All the ſubordinate dignities of the church may be conſidered as the nobility in the pope's ſpiritual empire.

But as in all others, ſo in this, the ſtrength of the monarchy conſiſts in the number of its ſubjects; and if we take into our view the ſecular and regular clergy in the church of Rome, the former bound by the moſt ſacred ties, and the latter not by vows only, but by their intereſts to the obedience of the holy ſee, we cannot but entertain a high opinion of its power; ſince long ago it was the calculation of a certain ſovereign, that in Europe he had three hundred thouſand pariſhes, and fifty thouſand convents, ſubject to his juriſdiction, who, more or leſs, upon different occaſions, reſort to Rome, and carry thither an immenſe treaſure. And it is very eaſy to diſcern, that nothing has been neglected which could poſſibly contribute to render the foundations of this monarchy firm and ſtrong: the moſt important truſt of educating youth is entirely in their hands who are devoted to the ſervice of the holy ſee; the Jeſuits are particularly famous for their application in this reſpect, and when they have received the firſt tincture of literature, ſuch as are ſent to compleat their ſtudies at the univerſities, meet with the ſame doctrine and diſcipline; and whatever the ſcience be to which they apply, veneration for the pope is a thing ſo frequently inſiſted on, and ſo ſtrongly impreſſed, that it is almoſt impoſſible they ſhould ever loſe it while they remain at thoſe ſeminaries of learning, and attend the offices of the church. Beſides theſe, the number of inferior clergy, who enjoy eccleſiaſtical benefices of all ſorts, are ſo numerous, and afford ſuch ample maintenance, and ſuch agreeable proſpects to men of all ranks and tempers, in conjunction with the canon law, which is peculiar to this ſpiritual monarchy, that the moſt effectual proviſion is

made

made for a conſtant ſucceſſion of perſons, bound to ſupport that intereſt, which is the ſupport of themſelves and all their pretenſions.

As theſe are bound by affection, and by finding their own account, to a conſtant ſubmiſſion, ſo the proper methods have been taken for ſubjecting the laics in that church alſo to ſuch an obedience as they cannot well break through. Amongſt theſe we may reckon auricular confeſſion, maſſes for the dead, the direction of female conſciences, the opportunities they have of working upon perſons in their dying moments; and many more circumſtances that might be mentioned, favourable to their intereſt, afford us a reaſonable probability that the papal authority will not decline much more than it has already done, eſpecially if ſucceeding popes imitate the moderation of their immediate predeceſſors, and endeavour to ſupport their influence rather by addreſs than by the force of eccleſiaſtical cenſures, which is a ſort of artillery that no longer does the execution it did in the darker ages, when the little learning there was remained entirely among the prieſts and the monks.

The reader will apprehend this more clearly, if he takes a ſhort view of the European powers, that ſtill profeſs obedience to the ſee of Rome. In Poland the clergy are numerous and well provided for, having a great ſhare of power allotted them by the conſtitution, and are for the moſt part compoſed of the younger ſons of the nobility. --- In Germany it is viſible, that the popiſh religion rather prevails than declines, and the eccleſiaſtical electors and other prelates are ſo formidable a body in the diet, as not to be apprehenſive of any future ſecularizations. It is, beſides, the intereſt of ſeveral great houſes to ſupport the church, as it is now conſtituted, on the ſcore of the preferments, which are in a manner entailed on the younger ſons of their family, ſo as not only to afford them noble eſtabliſhments, but alſo render them capable of ſupporting the head of their houſe, inſtead of being a burthen upon him, as would be the caſe if thoſe dignities were ſecularized.

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—The hereditary countries of the houſe of Auſtria remain ſtrictly attached to the ſee of Rome. --- The French, or Gallican church has, indeed, always claimed a kind of freedom, which having been improved by the ſtruggles that have been heretofore made againſt them, the modern popes have wiſely had recourſe to another method, which ſeems to have had a better effect, and whilſt the courts of Rome and Verſailles agree, both will find their account in the reciprocal ſupport of each other's power. In Spain and Portugal the papal authority ſtands upon a much ſtronger foundation, as appears from the amazing wealth of the clergy in the former, and the joy with which the ſovereign of the latter accepted very lately, from the pope, the title of *Moſt Faithful*, (conferred by a bull from the pope, Jan. 1749) as well as many inſtances of a ſuperſtitious regard to the doctrines and practices of that church. --- In Italy the influence of the pope extends every where, and he is ſo able to make either his favour or his diſpleaſure felt, that all the princes and ſtates of his communion, find it their intereſt to live upon good terms with his holineſs, and as none underſtand their own intereſt better, are like to continue in the ſame inclinations, received from their anceſtors, in that reſpect.

It has been generally ſuppoſed, that one of the maxims of the ſee of Rome has been, attaching itſelf to the ſuperior intereſt, and always courting that power moſt which is uppermoſt; and, in proof of this, much has and may be ſaid: but at the ſame time it is very certain, that the true intereſt of the holy ſee conſiſts in ſupporting the balance of power, becauſe its influence depends chiefly upon an equality among the princes of that communion; and if any of theſe ſhould gain an entire aſcendency, the ſee of Rome could not fail of feeling the firſt effects of it. This is not only evident in ſpeculation, but from experience likewiſe.—The truth is, that while the court of Rome continues famous for policy, we can never expect her falling from this maxim; for as, in decency, it imports the holy father

father to shew an equal affection for all who profess themselves his children, whereby he may best secure their reciprocal affection, duty and confidence*.

These points may be further illustrated, were we to consider his temporal authority, which the Roman pontiff enjoys in consequence of his dominions in Italy and elsewhere. He is lord of considerable territories, and possessed of gold and silver, which St. Peter, even admitting him to have been bishop of Rome, certainly did not bequeath to the see. What the dominions of the pope are, what his revenues and riches, nor whether these are lawful possessions, is not my province to enquire. It is not only probable, but unquestionable, that these are more the support of his supremacy and authority in the church, than any real persuasion of his infalibillity and divine right; though to establish such sentiments hath been made the study and business of the Jesuits.

1713. Pope Clement XI. was prevailed with by the Jesuits at Paris, to issue the bull Unigenitus, which chiefly relates to points of dispute between the Jansenists and the Dominicans, and for establishing the pope's authority. This bull, besides being an evidence that the pope may err, both in matters of faith and historical facts, proved the means of greatly endangering the authority of the pope; it kindled a flame in France which spread over the whole Romish church: broke out more violently after the death of Lewis XIV. The new king of Sicily would not part with his monarchy; and the zeal which the pope manifested, served only to increase the papal pensioners, among whom was now the Pretender, as he could no longer stay in France; for the bull, which begins with the pastoral office, made no impressions in France; and from the growing opposition that was made to it, not only in France, but in the Low Countries and Germany, he found it necessary to use his best efforts in its defence; but

* Abstract from the present State of Europe, p. 423.

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finding himſelf unequal to the taſk, he conſented at length to ſome overtures.

Benedict XIII. diſcovered a more pacific diſpoſition, and was much diſappointed in the great good he expected from the Jeſuits; for he found them more active in ſupport of the bull Unigenitus than he could have wiſhed. However, notwithſtanding cardinal de Noailles, and cardinal Fleury, &c. ſubſcribed it, Benedict always continued a ſtaunch Dominican. He publiſhed the bull Petioſus, which the Jeſuits will hardly admit to be a juſt expoſition of the doctrine of grace. We muſt not omit this pope's pacific diſpoſition, to reconcile the Roman, Greek, Lutheran, and reformed parties; and is more famous for perſonal endowments, eſpecially learning, than for the proſperity of his pontificate.

The intrigues and claſhings among the ſeveral Roman catholic courts, and the ambitious ſchemes of the cardinals (who now obtained the title of Eminences), the artifice and induſtry of the Jeſuits and other orders of prieſts, ſerved to weaken the power and influence of the popes. The occurrences of latter times convince us, that the meaſures, particularly of the Jeſuits, rendered them ſuſpected of being ſo entirely the emiſſaries of the pope, as to diſturb the peace and tranquillity of kingdoms.

The late extirpations of the order of Jeſuits, in Portugal and in France, are undeniable proofs that the pope's authority is no longer abſolute, but limited and reſtrained, where the Jeſuits have attempted an undue influence, or their principles, and their numbers, riches, and unconſtitutional meaſures, have been found inconvenient, or prejudicial to the civil ſtate of the kingdom.

In latter times the progreſs of arts and ſciences, and of learning in general, may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to be a very conſiderable means of limiting that unbounded power and authority of the pope, ſo long uſurped, and to weaken and deſtroy ſuch attempts as were made upon

upon the rights of princes; and at the ſame time to remove that unreaſonable ſuperſtition that too generally prevailed in the minds of the common people for whatever had the ſanction of papal authority; and this is equally applicable to thoſe errors and corruptions in doctrine, worſhip, and ceremonies, that have in proceſs of time prevailed in that church; many of the groſſeſt of them ſprung up in the darkeſt and moſt barbarous ages of chriſtianity, when learning degenerated into fabulous legends and monkiſh ſtories, when to underſtand Greek, and other languages, was ſuſpected, and to believe the Antipodes was eſteemed hereſy; then was the time to impoſe on an undiſcerning age, and to obtrude upon their underſtanding the belief of miracles performed by the relics of departed ſaints, and many doctrines, ſuch as purgatory, tranſubſtantiation, &c. which are not only unſcriptural, but repugnant both to reaſon and common ſenſe.

In the two laſt centuries the increaſe of knowledge, hath produced various effects among perſons of different ranks: thoſe, whoſe intereſt or prepoſſeſſions have not rendered them the friends and abettors of papal authority, and impoſitions on the conſciences of men under various pretenſions, and have ſeen the inconſiſtency of many of their doctrines, practices, and ceremonies, with genuine Chriſtianity, have paid only an external regard to their ceremonies, to avoid eccleſiaſtical or civil penalties: ſome have looked with indifference on all the outward forms and modes of religion, whilſt many have fallen into direct infidelity; and deiſm is now too general among the politer part of the inhabitants both in Italy and France.

This may ſuffice as a preliminary to the preſent ſtate of religion in the church of Rome, conſtitution, doctrine, &c.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the preſent conſtitution, diſcipline, doctrine, worſhip, and ceremonies of the church of Rome.

THE church is defined by the council of Trent to be the one, viſible, holy, and catholic, that is univerſal, eſtabliſhed by God on a ſolid baſis, who has beſtowed on it the power of opening the gates of heaven to all true believers, and ſhutting them to all heretics and infidels: it likewiſe has the power of pardoning and abſolving ſins, and excommunicating all ſuch as are diſobedient *. -- This church is both triumphant and militant: the former is *The illuſtrious ſociety of thoſe bleſſed ſpirits and ſaints, who having triumphed over the world, the fleſh and the devil, enjoy everlaſting happineſs in peace and ſecurity*: the latter is the congregation of all true believers upon earth, who are conſtantly obliged, during their whole lives, to reſiſt the world, the fleſh and the devil. -- Jeſus Chriſt is the immediate governor of that part of the church which is triumphant in the heavens; but as the church militant required a viſible head or director, he has ſubſtituted one in his room, who is accounted, by all true catholics, as the ſole and ſovereign depoſitory of the faith, and perpetual director of the belief, of all true Chriſtians †, who is commiſſioned to promote ſome of them to the higheſt preferments in heaven ‖, and to confer on others ſuch briefs as will one day entitle them thereunto ‡: it muſt not here be objected, that he breaks

* Catechiſm of the council of Trent.

† Monſieur Picart's Edition of the Religious Ceremonies and Cuſtoms of all Nations, vol. i. p. 284.

‖ The Canonization of Saints.

‡ Beatification.

in upon the prerogative of Jeſus Chriſt, ſince on the contrary no true believer can enter into heaven, but through the recommendation of this his viſible vicegerent *. This ſupremacy and dignity is conferred on the biſhop of Rome §, and if it be aſked, upon what authority they ground theſe boaſted claims and prerogatives, as well as the foundation in general of their doctrines, worſhip, and ceremonies, they will freely declare, that the tradition of the ancient fathers, and the authority of councils, ſomething beſide the ſcriptures and diſtinct from it, they acknowledge as of equal authority, the rule of their faith and practice.

I. But, in the firſt place, it may be proper to obſerve, that the biſhop of Rome is by way of pre-eminence, ſtiled POPE, a name derived from the Latin word *papa*. Their doctrines are from thence denominated popery, and the members of that church papiſt. This church is likewiſe called Roman catholic, becauſe the biſhop of Rome is not only ſtiled ſupreme, but oecumenical or univerſal biſhop: this title was firſt confirmed by Phocus to pope Boniface III. about 600 years after Chriſt †: the pope is likewiſe ſtiled holineſs in the abſtract, God's vicegerent, vicar of Jeſus Chriſt, ſucceſſor of St. Peter, prince of the apoſtles, and father of all the kings of the earth ‖. He wears three keys; one as an emblem of his power to give abſolution, or of admitting into the kingdom of heaven; another to denote his power of excommunicating ſinners; and the third, with much ceremony, is delivered unto him, to ſignify and imply his univerſal knowledge and infalli-

§ Picart, ibid.

* Monſieur Picart, from whoſe edition of this work, illuſtrated with his own cuts, we have ſelected many extracts, was educated in the religion of the Roman catholics, and reſided at Paris till, upon his favouring ſome proteſtant principles, he found it neceſſary to retire to Holland. This work was originally wrote by Leo of Modena, a rabbi of Venice, 1637. He appears in general to be impartial.

† Dr. Chandler's Notes of the Church, p. 26.

‖ Mr. Bernard Picart's Religious Ceremonies, vol. i. p. 299.

bility;

bility; and he wears a tripple crown to inform the Chriſtian world, that he is prieſt, emperor, and king. And, we may with great truth and impartiality aſſert, that the whole ſcheme of the Romiſh religion is admirably well adjuſted to maintain, in every reſpect, the power of the ſupreme head: he is reputed infallible that his deciſions may have the greater weight. --- The traditions of the church are ſubject to his controul: all religious doctrines are liable to his cenſure: the power of abſolution, even in the higheſt caſes, are attributed to him: he diſpenſes the treaſures of the church, I mean ſpiritual treaſures, ſuch as pardons and indulgences: he grants diſpenſations of all kinds: he regulates faſts and feaſts at his pleaſure: in a word, being St. Peter's ſucceſſor and viſible head of the Chriſtian church, he has prerogatives without bounds and without number *.

Dr. Barrow † has drawn up the claims of the pontiff as follows: that to the pope, as ſovereign monarch, by ſanction of the whole church, do appertain royal prerogatives, called *regalia petri*, in the oath preſcribed to the biſhops, ſuch as theſe which follow:

To be ſuperior to the whole church, and to its repreſentatives, in a general ſynod of biſhops: --- to convocate general ſynods at his pleaſure, all biſhops being obliged to attend at his ſummons: to preſide in ſynods ſo as to ſuggeſt matter, promote, obſtruct, and over-rule, all the debates in them: to confirm, or invalidate, their determinations, giving life to them by his aſſent, or ſubſtracting it by his diſſent: to define points of doctrine, or to decide points of controverſy authoritatively: to enact, ſuſpend, diſpenſe with, eccleſiaſtical laws and canons: to relax or evacuate eccleſiaſtical cenſures, by indulgence and pardon: to make void promiſes, oaths, and obligations to laws, by his diſpenſations: to be the fountain of all juriſdiction and dignity: to be himſelf

* Preſent State of Europe, p. 426.
† Dr. Barrow's Works, 4to edit. p. 31.

accountable for none of his doings, exempt from judgement, and liable to no reproof—to ſummon and commiſſionate ſoldiers by croiſade, to fight againſt and deſtroy infidels.

But though this is in general admitted, we ought here to obſerve, there are diverſity of ſentiments with reſpect to veſting this power ſolely in the perſon of the pope. The Jeſuits, and almoſt all the ſeveral orders of monks, in Italy, profeſs to believe, I. That the pope alone is infallible, and have attempted to prove it in their diſputes with the Janſeniſts. But this appearing too groſs a ſuppoſition, has been denied by Bellarmine *, and diſclaimed by pope Adrian, &c.†

II. Others aſſert, that infallibility is lodged not in the pope, but in a general council only. Thus it was agreed in the councils of Conſtance and Baſil; and this is the opinion of the Gallican church in general ‡, and of ſeveral learned doctors elſewhere §.

III. That a pope and a general council together, are infallible, i. e. That when a general council is called by the pope, when he reſides in it, either in perſon or by his legates, and when he confirms its decrees; then they are infallible: they cannot poſſibly err, and ought to be implicitly ſubmitted to and obeyed ‖.

IV. Others are of opinion, that infallibility is only in the church univerſal, i. e diffuſively in the whole myſtical body of Chriſt, conſiſting of all its members here upon earth, ſo as that, though neither pope nor council, nor any particular church, are infallible, yet when their decrees are received and ſubmitted to by the catholic church, they then become infallibly true and abſolutely

* Bellarmine de Pontifice, l. iv. c. ii.

† Monſieur Voltaire ſays, that the infallibility of the pope, with the power founded in it, is a chimera not believed even at Rome; and yet it is maintained—that the pope is a ſacred perſon, whoſe feet are to be kiſſed, but his hands bound.

‡ Ibid. Creſſy in Exomolog. in the Appendix, ch. iv. numb. 7. Holden de Reſolutione Fide, l. ii. ch. i.

§ See Walch's Preface to the Hiſtory of the Pope's.

‖ Bellarmine,

binding.

binding ¶. Accordingly they build their faith and practice on tradition, and decrees of ſynods and councils, as of equal, if not greater authority, than the ſcripture. The council of Trent declared, "That the oral traditions of the catholic church, meaning the Roman, were to be received with equal piety and reverence, as the books of the Old and New Teſtament *; and he that deſpiſeth the ſaid conditions, is accurſed †." Accordingly the church claim the ſole right of determining what books of the Old and New Teſtament, ſhall be deemed canonical, and in what ſenſe any particular paſſages of it are to be underſtood. And in the thirteenth articles of the catechiſm, compoſed by a committee appointed by the council of Trent, and approved by that council, it is ſaid, that the church being inſtituted by God to be the guardian of the ſcripture and tradition, (the word written and unwritten) from her we are to receive the canonical writing. And from hence the new canon of ſcripture, as it is called, took its riſe ‡.

Gratian declares, that the decrees of councils, and the decretals of popes, ought to be eſteemed of equal authority with the ſacred ſcriptures §. To the ſame purpoſe pope Gregory the Great ‖.

The CANON law is a collection of eccleſiaſtical conſtitutions, deciſions, and maxims, taken partly from ſcripture, partly from the ancient councils, and partly from the decrees of popes, and the reports and the ſayings of the primitive fathers, whereby all matters of polity in the Romiſh church are regulated.

The common law, that obtained throughout the Weſt till the twelfth century, was the collection of canons made by Dionyſius Exiguus in 520; the capitularies of Charlemaign, and the decrees of the popes from Sircius

¶ Bellarmine de Concil. l. ii. ch. ii.

* Pari pietatis affectu ac reverentia ſuſcipit ac venerator. See alſo Wright's Scrip. and Tradition, p. 13.

† Council. Trid. Decr. de Scripturis.

‡ Monſ. Picart, vol. I. p. 268.

§ Diſt. 19, and 20.

‖ Lib. i. epiſt. xxiv.

to Anaſtaſius.—No regard was had to any thing not compriſed in theſe; and the French ſtill maintain the rights of the Gallican church to conſiſt in their not being obliged to admit any thing elſe; but to be at liberty to reject all innovations made in the canonical juriſprudence ſince that compilation, as well as all papal decrees before Sircius.

Indeed, between the eighth and eleventh centuries, the canon law was mixed and confounded with the papal decrees from St. Clement to Sircius, which till then had been unknown: this gave occaſion to a new reform or body of the canon law, which is the collection ſtill extant under the title of the Concordance of the Diſcarding Canons, made in 1151, by Gratian, a Benedictine monk, from texts of ſcripture, councils, and ſentiments of the fathers in the ſeveral points of eccleſiaſtical polity. This work he divided according to the order of matters, not of times and councils, as had been done before; ſo that, upon the appearance of this, all the ancient collections immediately ſunk.—It is divided into three parts; the firſt into an hundred and eight diſtinctions; the ſecond into thirty-ſix cauſes, and the third into five diſtinct parts: the ſecond part of the canon law conſiſts of the decrees of the popes from 1150, to pope Gregory IX. in 1229.

In 1297, pope Boniface continued the papal decrees as far as his time; this part the French make particular exception to, by reaſon of that pope's differences with their king, Philip the Fair. To theſe pope John XXII. added the Clementines, or the five books of the conſtitutions of his predeceſſor Clement V. And to all theſe were after added twenty conſtitutions of the ſaid pope John, called the Extravagantes; and ſome other conſtitutions of his ſucceſſors.

All theſe compoſe the body, or corpus, of the canon law, to this time, which, including the comments, makes (three volumes in folio) the rule and meaſure of church government*. There are a variety of other collections of

* Chambers's Dictionary.

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the canons and decrees of councils, which make up the body of the canon law; which canons and eccleſiaſtical laws it is the buſineſs and profeſſion of the canoniſts, or eccleſiaſtical lawyers, to ſtudy, explain, and apply with great exactneſs; and to vindicate their authority, and maintain an inviolable regard to them, by all the ſanctions annexed to them.

But beſides theſe eccleſiaſtical laws and canons, which are the bulwark of the conſtitution of the Romiſh church, there are other inſtitutions of that church more eſpecially calculated for preſerving an uniformity of faith among Chriſtians. Theſe formularies or creeds are chiefly three, viz. that called the Apoſtles, of which we have given account, p. 30; the Nicene, p. 41; and the Athanaſian, p. 56, of which a repetition is unneceſſary, I ſhall only obſerve, that the Nicene creed has been ever held in great eſteem by that church, and conſtitutes the firſt twelve articles of that ultimate rule of their faith and practice, pope Pius IV. creed.

The creed itſelf contains the ſubſtance of the decrees and canons of the council of Trent, and being uſually divided into twenty-four articles, is ſo plauſible as to expreſs the firſt twelve in the very words of that creed called the Nicene, the greateſt part of which moſt proteſtants profeſs to believe and acknowledge: but there is this great difference, as was before obſerved, between the manner wherein the Nicene creed is impoſed in popiſh countries, and wherein they, who adhere to true proteſtant principles, receive it, or any part of it; that the one require it to be received upon an equal footing with the holy ſcriptures; the other believe and acknowledge the things contained in it, not becauſe the fathers of the Nicene council ſo believed and ſo decreed; but becauſe they apprehend, that the things themſelves are contained in the holy ſcriptures, and ſo far only as they are therein contained; ſo that their faith is ultimately reſolved into the word of God, and not into the commandments of men: herein they aſſert their liberty as becomes proteſtants *.

* Burroughs's View of Popery, p. 7.

But this, it ſeems, was not enough for a creed of the church of Rome: there muſt be ſome form of faith, whereby, as by an authentic act, papiſts muſt for ever be diſtinguiſhed from proteſtants. Twelve new articles are therefore added, which are all truly Romiſh, and built not upon the authority of ſcripture, but ſolely upon tradition and human authority *, viz. principally the council of Trent.

The papiſts profeſs to believe the creeds themſelves, from the authority of tradition, or of thoſe councils that made or confirmed them.

The orthodox faith does not depend upon the ſcriptures conſidered abſolutely in themſelves, but as explained by catholic tradition. The faith was compriz-ed and preſerved in creeds, handed down from one orthodox biſhop to another, whoſe buſineſs it was to keep this ſacred *depoſitum* pure and undefiled, and to deliver it to his ſucceſſor.—It is the moſt compendious way to orthodoxy to ſtudy the tradition of the church*.

It may here be proper to obſerve the manner in which the articles of pope Pius's creed are connected with thoſe of the Nicene. The Nicene creed makes mention of one holy catholic and apoſtolic church; and the creed of pope Pius begins with a profeſſion of admitting and embracing the traditions, &c. of the ſame church; inſinuating that all the traditions of the church of Rome are traditions of the one holy catholic and apoſtolic church: and it is certain, that the Romaniſts do pretend, that all theſe characters belong to their church, and to that alone; they make themſelves the whole church of Chriſt, and exclude all others from being ſo much as a part of it; they confine holineſs to themſelves, and confidently affirm, that their church alone is derived from the apoſtles †.

* Burroughs's View of Popery.

† Rhemiſh's Annotations on the Argument of the Epiſtles.

* Biſhop Hare's Difficulties that attend the Study of the Scripture, p. 6.

† Burroughs's View of Popery, p. 8.

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These things are not indeed expreſsly aſſerted in the XIIIth article of pope Pius's creed; but ſince this creed, in its XXIIId article, ſpeaks expreſsly of the holy catholic apoſtolic Roman church, as the mother and miſtreſs of all churches, it therefore evidently confines theſe characters to that church:—and ſince this creed, compoſed by pope Pius IV. was approved and confirmed by the council of Trent, as the rule and ſtandard of the Roman catholic church §. To this I ſhall pay principal regard, as it may be explained and confirmed by Boſſuet, in his Expoſition of the Catholic Catechiſm—in the Breviary—the Catechiſm *ad parochos*

§ The council of Trent was the laſt general council, begun by pope Paul III. Dec. 15, 1545; continued by Julius III. reſumed by pope Pius IV. in 1559, and ended by him Dec. 4, 1563.

The opening of this council, together with the remarkable tranſactions of it, and its being the final council for determining all controverſies relative to religion, render it the moſt conſiderable of any.

On the 15th of December the pope's legate, with twenty-five biſhops, clothed in their pontifical habits, aſſembled with a great number of divines, the clergy, and the regular ambaſſadors of the king of the Romans. The maſs of the Holy Ghoſt was celebrated, and Cornelius Muſſin made an elaborate diſcourſe of the authority of councils, that hereby hereſies were extirpated, manners reformed, ſchiſms extinguiſhed, cruſadoes decreed, and even kings depoſed, &c. &c. Then the preſident of the council demanded of the aſſembly, to order and declare, that the holy general council of Trent do begin, and is begun, to the glory of the Holy Trinity, the increaſe and exultation of the faith, and the Chriſtian religion, the extirpation of hereſy, the union of the church, the reformation of the clergy and Chriſtian people, and the depreſſion and extinguiſhing of the enemies of the Chriſtian name; to which the prelates declare their ſatisfaction, by anſwering *placet*, and ordered the notaries to make a public act of it.—There were twenty-five ſeſſions, in which were preſent ſeven cardinals, five whereof were the pope's legates, ſixteen ambaſſadors from kings, princes and republics, two hundred and fifty patriarchs, archbiſhops and biſhops, abbots and generals of orders, all divines and doctors of the civil law *(a)*.

The proceedings and tranſactions of this council, their decrees, &c. ſhew in more legible characters the deſign and tendency of this council, which to uſe the words of a reverend prelate, was for no other end than to give the force of laws to the many abuſes complained of, and thereby render the wound incurable.

—in

(a) Peter Jurieu. Hiſtory of the Council of Trent.

—in the Catholic Christian Instructed in the Sacraments, Ceremonies, and Observations of the church, by R. C. —In the modest and true Account of the chief Points in Controverly between the Roman Catholics and Protestants, by N. C.—In the Profession of the Catholic Faith, extracted out of the Council of Trent—from a Vindication of the Roman Catholics—as also a piece entitled, a plain and rational Account of the Roman Catholic Faith, and such other of their books as have come under my notice.

A Summary of the doctrine, discipline, and ceremonies, of the church of Rome, as contained in Pope PIUS's Creed.

Article I. *I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible*§. *The one true and living God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*‡.

Exposition. It principally consists in believing, that he is the Creator and Lord of all things; that it is our duty to adhere to him with all the powers and faculties of the mind, through faith, hope, and charity, as being the sole object that makes us happy by the communication of that *summum bonum*, which is himself. The internal adoration, which we render unto God in spirit and in truth, is attended with external signs, whereof sacrifice is the principal, as a solemn acknowledgment of God's sovereignty over us, and of our absolute dependence on him †.

The idea of God, which nature has engraven on the minds of men, represents him as a being independent, omnipotent, all-perfect, the author of all good and all evils, that is, of all the punishments which are inflicted for sin ‖.

§ Pope Pius's Creed, Art. I.
‡ Cath. Christian, p. 5.
† Bossuet's Expos. of the Cath. Catechism, p. 3.
‖ Lamy's Introduction to the Scriptures, p. 372.

Art.

Art. II. *I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, light of light, very God of very God, begotten not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.*

Expos. I do profess to be fully assured of this most certain and necessary truth, that Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Messiah, is the true, proper, and natural Son of God, begotten of the substance of the Father, which, being incapable of division or multiplication, is so really and absolutely communicated to him, that he is of the same essence, God of God, light of light, very God of very God. I acknowledge none but him to be begotten of God by that proper and natural generation, and thereby excluding all which are not begotten, as it is a generation; all which are said to be begotten, and which are called sons, but are so only by adoption.

Art. III. *Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate of the Holy Ghost of the virgin Mary, and was made man* *.

Expos. That in this person, the divine and human natures were so united, that they were not confounded, but that two whole and perfect natures, the godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person; that of him many things are said, which are proper to one nature only.

Art. IV. *And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; he suffered and was buried.*

Expos. That this person did truly suffer in his human nature, the divine being not capable of suffering; tho' he was crucified, dead, and buried, appears from Matt. xxvii. *When by sin mankind was become obnoxious to the divine justice, he offered himself an expiatory sacrifice.*

Art. V. *And the third day rose again, according to the scriptures.*

* Profession of the Catholic Faith, p. 3.

Expos.

Expoſ. Chriſt did truly riſe again from death with that very body which was crucified and buried. I alſo knew him in the fleſh, ſaith St. Ignatius, and believe on him: *And when he came to thoſe who were with Peter, he ſaid to them, Touch me, handle me, and ſee that I am no ſpirit without a body.*

Art. VI. *He aſcended into heaven, ſits at the right hand of the Father.*

Expoſ. This article teaches us, that he aſcended in like manner into heaven, and ſitteth at the right hand of God to make interceſſion for us.

Art. VII. *And is to come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, of whoſe kingdom there ſhall be no end.*

Expoſ. Our Lord's remaining in heaven till the day of judgement appears from Acts iii. 20, 21. *And he ſhall ſend Jeſus Chriſt, which before was preached unto you, whom the heavens muſt receive until the times of the reſtitution of all things.* And chap. x. v. 42, where St. Peter ſays, *And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to teſtify that it is he, which was ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead.*

Art. VIII. *I believe in the Holy Ghoſt, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified—who ſpake by the prophets.*

Expoſ. This article teacheth, 1. That the Holy Ghoſt proceeds both from the Father and the Son. 2. That he is of one ſubſtance, majeſty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God. Inaſmuch as ſuch operations are aſcribed to the Holy Ghoſt, as cannot be aſcribed but to a perſon diſtinct from the Father and the Son, and therefore muſt be a perſon diſtinct from them both; and inaſmuch as ſuch things are aſcribed to him, as cannot be aſcribed to any but God, and for this reaſon they are co-equal and conſubſtantial.

Art.

Art. IX. *I believe in one holy catholic and apoſtolic church* †.

Qu. When it is aſked in the grounds of the catholic doctrine (contained in the profeſſion of faith of pope Pius IV.) What do you gather from theſe words? it is anſwered, 1. That Jeſus Chriſt has always a true church upon earth. 2. That this church is always one by the union of all her members in one faith and communion. 3. That ſhe is always pure and holy in her doctrine and terms of communion, and conſequently always free from pernicious errors. 4. That ſhe is catholic, that is, univerſal, by being the church of all ages, and more or leſs of all nations. 5. That this church muſt have in her a ſucceſſion from the apoſtles, and a lawful miſſion derived from them. 6. (Which follows from all the reſt) That this true church of Chriſt cannot be any of the proteſtant ſects, but muſt be the ancient church communicating with the pope or biſhop of Rome *; that this church is infallible in all matters relating to faith, ſo that ſhe can neither add nor retrench from what Chriſt taught ‖.

Accordingly we find, the catholic Chriſtian aſſerts, that God has been pleaſed, in every age, to work moſt evident miracles in their church, by the miniſtry of his ſaints in raiſing the dead to life, in curing the blind and the lame, in caſting out devils, in healing inveterate diſeaſes in a moment, atteſted by the moſt authentic monuments, which will be a ſtanding evidence to all nations, that the church of Rome is the true ſpouſe of Chriſt †.

† Pope Pius's Creed, Art. IX.

* Ibid. p. 6.

‖ Ibid. p. 12. See theſe Grounds, &c. anſwered, in a View of Popery, by the Rev. Mr. Joſ. Burroughs, p. 1 to 30.

† See Middleton's Prefatory Diſcourſe, p. 90. See likewiſe Cardinal Bellarmine's Notes of the True Church, and Dr. Chandler's Anſwer thereto, in his Two Diſcourſes preached at Salters Hall, and a Collection of Travels, publiſhed by Churchill, p. 805.

Art.

Art. X. *I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins.*

Expos. Baptism is defined by the church of Rome to be a sacrament instituted by our Saviour to wash away original sin, and all those we may have committed—to communicate to mankind the spiritual regeneration and the grace of Christ Jesus, and to unite them to him as the living members to the head §.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem says, the Catechumen, after they were uncloathed, were anointed from the feet to the head with exorcised oil; after this they were conducted to the laver, that they were asked, "If they believed in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?" That after they had made a profession of this faith, they were plunged three times into the water *.

Those, without all doubt, were judged the most important doctrines of the gospel, in which the Catechumens were required to be instructed before they were received into the church by baptism. This short form was the original creed proposed to the Catechumens, viz. "I believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost;" which, in the second century, came to be enlarged, in opposition to the Gnostic heresy †.

But since that they have changed both the subject and mode §.

The ceremonies now used in the administration of baptism, according to Durandus, and other approved authors, are, 1. They consecrate the water with prayer, and pouring in of oil at three times. 2. They cross the party on the eyes, ears, nose, and breast. 3. He is exorcised with a certain charm, or exsufflation, or breathing. 4. They put consecrated salt into his mouth. 5. They put spittle into his nose and ears. 6. Add imposition of hands, and the sacerdotal blessing. 7.

§ Alet's Ritual.

* Dupin, vol. II. p. 113.

† D. Bull. Ind. Eccles. Cath. lxiv. s iii. D. Wall's Hist. of Infant Bapt. p. 69, s. x. See Bereman's Hi. of the Trinitarian Controversy, p. 21.

§ Lawrence of Christian Morals, v. I. p. 193.

They anoint him with holy oil on the breaſt. 8. And laſtly, they anoint him on the crown of the head, uſing perfume,&c. There was anciently the kiſs of peace given him; but that is now left off, together with putting a lighted wax taper into his hand—giving him milk and honey to drink, and cloathing him with a white garment ‖.

Art. XI. *I look for the reſurrection of the dead.*

Expoſ. I am fully perſuaded of this, as a moſt evident and infallible truth, that as it is appointed for all men once to die, ſo it is alſo determined that all men ſhall riſe from death; that the ſouls ſeparated from our bodies, are in the hands of God, and live; that the bodies diſſolved in duſt, or ſcattered in aſhes, ſhall be recollected in themſelves, and re-united to their ſouls; that the ſame fleſh which lived before ſhall be revived, and the ſame numerical body which did fall ſhall riſe; that this reſurrection ſhall be univerſal, no man excepted; that the juſt ſhall be raiſed to a reſurrection of life, and the unjuſt to a reſurrection of damnation; and that this ſhall be performed at the laſt day, when the trump ſhall ſound.

Art. XII. *I believe in the life of the world to come. Amen.*

Expoſ. I believe that the juſt, after their reſurrection and abſolution, ſhall, as the bleſſed of the Father, receive the inheritance, and as the ſervants of God, enter into their Maſter's joy, freed from all poſſibility of death, ſin, and ſorrow, filled with an inconceivable fullneſs of happineſs, confirmed in an abſolute ſecurity of an eternal enjoyment in the preſence of God and of the Lamb for ever and ever†.

‖ Roman Ritual.

† Thus far the profeſſion of the catholic faith is conformable to the apoſtles, or rather to the Nicene creed, and to the general belief of proteſtants themſelves; but the following Profeſſion of the Roman catholic church, as contained in the additional articles of pope Pius's creed, with the expoſitions thereon, will appear repugnant to the profeſſion of proteſtants.

Art.

Art. XIII. *I moſt firmly admit and embrace the apoſtolical and eccleſiaſtical traditions, and all other obſervations and conſtitutions of the ſame church*.*

They affirm that divine truth, which we are all bound to receive, to be partly written, and partly delivered by word of mouth; which is more fully expreſſed in the preface to the Roman catechiſm, drawn up by order of the church of Rome, where we find theſe words towards the concluſion of it—"The whole doctrine to be delivered to the faithful is contained in the word of God, which word of God is diſtributed into ſcripture and tradition§."

He that receives the faith of the Romiſh church, not only receives thoſe doctrines in which we agree with them, but the whole doctrine of the church, ſummarily abridged in the creed of pope Pius IV. in all the points and articles of faith which that church delivers to be believed of all men that deſire to be ſaved, which are to be conceived as one entire body or ſyſtem of truths, and all aſſented to, believed, and received, on pain of damnation. Thus Fiſher the Jeſuit‡, "Faith muſt be entire, whole, and ſound in all points; and it is not ſufficient ſtedfaſtly to believe ſome points, miſbelieving, or not believe others, or any one. For not to believe any one point whatſoever, which God by revealing it doth teſtify to be true, and which by his church he hath commanded us to believe, muſt needs be damnable, as being a notable injury to God's verity, and a great diſobedience to his will." And Chamelon aſſerts the ſame, "All articles (ſays he) of faith, ſo determined by the church, are fundamental, none of them may be denied without hereſy†."

Art. XIV. *I do admit the holy ſcriptures in the ſame ſenſe that Holy Mother Church doth, whoſe buſineſs it is to*

* Pope Pius's creed, art. xiii.
§. Romiſh Catechiſm.
‡ Cap. iv. in his Treatiſe of Faith.
† Concilium Reditus, p. 20.

judge

judge of the true ſenſe and interpretation of them, and I will interpret them according to the unanimous conſent of the fathers *.

The council of Trent decreed that the ſcripture alone is not a rule of faith without tradition, and traditions are to be received with the like regard and veneration as the ſcriptures ‖.

The author of the profeſſion of catholic faith, on the article of ſcripture and tradition, aſks,

Q. What do you believe concerning the ſcriptures ?

A. That they are to be received by all Chriſtians as the infallible word of God.

Q. Do you look upon the ſcriptures to be clear and plain in all points neceſſary to ſalvation ? *A.* No.

Q. How then is the danger to be avoided ?

A. By taking the meaning and interpretation of the ſcripture from the church, and by apoſtolical and eccleſiaſtical tradition.

Q. What do you mean by apoſtolical tradition ?

A. All ſuch points of faith or church-diſcipline which were taught or eſtabliſhed by the apoſtles.

Q. What difference is there between apoſtolical and eccleſiaſtical traditions ?

A. Apoſtolical traditions are thoſe which had their origin or inſtitution from the apoſtles, ſuch as infant-baptiſm, the Lord's day, (or firſt day of the week) receiving the ſacrament, faſting, &c. *Eccleſiaſtical* traditions are ſuch as received their inſtitution from the church, ſuch as holidays, feaſts, and faſts.

Q. How are we to know what traditions are apoſtolical, and what not ?

A. In the ſame manner, and by the ſame authority, by which we know what ſcriptures are apoſtolical, and what not ; that is, by the authority of the apoſtolical church, guided by the unerring ſpirit of God.

Q. But why ſhould not the ſcripture alone be the rule of our faith, without having recourſe to apoſtolical traditions ?

* Pope Pius's Creed, art. xiv.

‖ Con. Trident. ſeſſ. iv.

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‖ Con. Trident. ſeſſ. iv.

A. First, Becauſe without the help of apoſtolical traditions we cannot ſo much as tell what is ſcripture, and what not. Second, Becauſe infant-baptiſm, and ſeveral other neceſſary articles, are either not at all contained in ſcripture, or at leaſt are not plain in the ſcripture without the help of tradition.

For Chriſt has left his church, and her paſtors and teachers, to be our guides in all controverſies relating to religion, and conſequently of holy writ ‡.

Thus from the tenor of this article it appears, that the holy ſcripture in general is accounted ſo obſcure, even in things of the greateſt importance, that the common people muſt by no means be allowed to take their own ſenſe of it, but muſt have recourſe to the interpretation of the church.

Art. XV. *I do profeſs and believe that there are ſeven ſacraments, truly and properly ſo called, inſtituted by Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, and neceſſary for the ſalvation of mankind, though not all of them to every one, viz. baptiſm, confirmation, euchariſt, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony; and that they do confer grace; and that of theſe baptiſm, confirmation, and orders, cannot be repeated without ſacrilege. — I alſo receive and admit the received and approved rites of the catholic church, in her ſolemn adminiſtration of all the aforeſaid ſacraments.*

A *ſacrament* is an inſtitution of Chriſt, conſiſting in ſome outward ſign or ceremony, by which grace is given to the ſoul of the worthy receiver *.

Baptiſm is a ſacrament inſtituted by Chriſt, according to his commiſſion, and from the belief and practice of the church of Chriſt in all ages, and of the apoſtles themſelves, who adminiſtered baptiſm in water †.

Confirmation is a ſacrament wherein by the invocation of the Holy Ghoſt, and the impoſition of the

* Profeſſion of Catholic Faith, p. 15, 16, and 17.

‡ Ibid. p. 19.

† See the Xth Article of this Creed. Alſo, Profeſſion of Catholic Faith, p. 20.

biſhops

biſhops hands, with the unction of holy chriſm, a perſon receives the grace of the Holy Ghoſt, and a ſtrength in order to the profeſſing of his faith ‡.

In this ſacrament the church of Rome uſe oil, olive, and balm; the oil to ſignify the clearneſs of a good conſcience, and the balm as the ſavour of a good reputation; and uſe this form: "I ſign thee with the ſign of the croſs, and confirm thee with the chriſm of ſalvation in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt". For which they quote tradition ‖.

Confirmation is that which makes us perfect Chriſtians, and impreſſes an indelible character after baptiſm, and imparts to us the ſpirit of fortitude, whereby we are enabled to profeſs Chriſtianity even at the hazard of our lives; and is therefore deemed a ſacrament by the church *.

The ſacrament of the *Lord's ſupper*, or the *Euchariſt*. "Euchariſt ‡ is a word, ſays Calmet, particularly ſet apart in the catholic church, to ſignify that ſacrament which really and in truth contains the body and blood of our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, under the appearance of bread and wine, conſecrated at the ſacrifice of the maſs. It is called euchariſt, becauſe Jeſus Chriſt, in the inſtitution of this divine ſacrament, gave thanks to God, broke the bread, and bleſſed the cup; *Euchariſtia* in Greek ſignifying thankſgivings, and anſwers to the Hebrew *Barach*, to bleſs, or *Hodah*, to praiſe †.

Penance or infliction, the act of uſing or ſubmitting to puniſhment, public or private, as an expreſſion of repentance for ſin, is deemed one of the ſeven ſacra-

‡ Profeſſion of Catholic Faith, p. 20.
‖ Biſhop Burnet's Expoſition of the XXXIX Articles, p. 336.
* Calmet's Dict. Article of Confirmation.
‡ The word *Euchariſt* is not, as our author ſays, peculiar to the Roman catholic church, but his explanation of it is, and the eu chariſt, as he interprets it, one of the capital and groſs errors of that church. There is more truth in the reaſon alledged by him, for denominating the ſacrament of the Lord's Supper, by this term euchariſt. Strange! ſo abſurd a doctrine as that of tranſubſtantiation, ſhould be ſeriouſly aſſerted by men of underſtanding.
† Article Euchariſt.

ments: — it includes confeſſion of ſins to the prieſt, which, if it be accompanied with any degree of contrition, does, upon abſolution received from the prieſt, put them into a ſtate of ſalvation, though they have lived the moſt lewd and debauched lives *.

Q. When the queſtion is aſked in the Grounds, &c. What do you mean by the ſacrament of penance?

A. The anſwer is, Confeſſion of ſins with a ſincere repentance, and the prieſt's abſolution †.

The council of Trent not only aſcribes to prieſts the character of preſidents and judges for remitting or reclaiming of ſins, Seſſion xiv. cap. v. and ſpeaks of the penitents in confeſſion, as brought before a tribunal, that by the penitence of the prieſt they might be delivered from their ſins, cap. vi. but, in the ninth canon of the ſame ſeſſion, pronounces an anathema on any who deny that the ſacramental abſolution of the prieſt is a judicial act.

The papiſts define penance to be, "A ſacrament conſiſting in ſome outward ſign or ceremony, by which grace is given to the ſoul of the worthy receiver, inſtituted by Chriſt when, breathing upon the diſciples, he gave them the Holy Ghoſt to remit and retain ſins; that is, to reconcile the faithful fallen into ſin after baptiſm: it differeth from baptiſm not only in matter and form, but alſo, becauſe the miniſter of baptiſm is not a judge in that ordinance; whereas after baptiſm the ſinner preſents himſelf before the tribunal of the prieſt as guilty, to be ſet at liberty by his ſentence: — it is, however, as neceſſary as baptiſm: the form conſiſts in the words, "I do abſolve thee." Contrition, confeſſion, and ſatisfaction, are parts of penance, and the effect of it is reconciliation with God. — Contrition is grief of mind for ſins committed with purpoſe to ſin no more, and was ever neceſſary at all times, but eſpecially in ſuch as ſin after baptiſm: it is a preparation

* Biſhop Tillotſon's Danger of Salvation in the Church of Rome.

† Grounds of the Catholic Faith, p. 21.

to

to remiſſion of ſins: — and by penance the church hath ever underſtood that Chriſt hath inſtituted the entire confeſſion of ſins, as neceſſary, by the law of God, to thoſe who fall after baptiſm: for, having inſtituted the prieſts his vicars for judges of all mortal ſins, it is certain, that they cannot exerciſe this judgement without knowledge of the cauſe.—But, when this is done, the prieſt, who hath authority, delegate or ordinary, over the penitent, remits his ſins by a judicial act; and the greater prieſts reſerve to themſelves the pardon of ſome faults more grievous, as does the pope; and there is no doubt, but that every biſhop may do this in his dioceſe; and this reſervation is of force before God. — And in the hour of death any prieſt may abſolve any penitent from any ſin. Satisfactions impoſed by the prieſts — What theſe are, are too well known to need deſcription ‡.

Extreme unction is a ſacrament, and to be adminiſtered when perſons are in imminent danger, and laſt of all to be applied *.

Q. What do you mean by extreme unction?

A. You have the full deſcription of it in James v. 14, 15. *Is any ſick among you, let him call for the elders (the prieſts) of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſick, and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up, and if he have committed ſins, they ſhall be forgiven him* §.

Orders. If any one ſhall ſay, that orders or holy ordination is not truly and properly a ſacrament, inſtituted by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or that it is a human contrivance invented by men, who were ignorant of eccleſiaſtical affairs, or that it is only a particular rite of chuſing miniſters of the word of God, and of ſacra-

‡ See Council of Trent, Seſſion. xiv. and a Profeſſion of Catholic Faith, Printed in 1734. alſo Dr. Hunt on Penance and Pilgrimages, p. 21.

* Trident. ſeſſion. xiv. c. xiii.

§ Grounds of the Catholic Faith, p. 23.

ments, let him be anathema ‖; --- or that the Holy Ghoſt is not given by holy ordination, let him be anathema ‖ ‖.

Orders, ſays the author of the profeſſion of the catholic faith, is a ſacrament inſtituted by Chriſt, by which biſhops, prieſts, &c. are conſecrated to their reſpective functions, and receive grace to diſcharge them well.

Matrimony. If any man ſays that this is not truly and properly one of the ſeven ſacraments, inſtituted by Jeſus Chriſt, but that it is an inſtitution only of the church, and does not confer grace, let him be anathema *.

And if any man ſays, a churchman in holy orders may marry or contract marriage, and that when it is contracted it is good and valid, notwithſtanding any eccleſiaſtical law to the contrary, or that any who have vowed continence may contract marriage, let him be anathema †.

This was firſt inſtituted by God Almighty in Paradiſe between our firſt parents, and this inſtitution was confirmed by Chriſt in the new law, Matt. xix. 4, 5, 6. where he concludes, *What God hath joined together let no man put aſunder* §.

Art. XVI. *I embrace and receive every thing that hath been defined and declared by the holy council of Trent, concerning original ſin and juſtification* **.

Good works do truly deſerve eternal life, and whoſoever holds the contrary is accurſed † †.

The council of Trent declares that all of the human kind have loſt their holineſs and righteouſneſs by the ſin of Adam, ſeſſion v. ſection 2. making an exception for the Virgin Mary.

‖ Dupin's Hiſt. of the Council of Trent, Seſſion xxiii. Canon iii.
‖ ‖ Ibid. Canon iv.
* Seſſion xxiv. Canon i.
† Canon ix.
§ Grounds of the Catholic Faith, p. 23.
** Pope Pius's Creed, Article XVI.
† † Trid. Seſſion vi. c. xvi. Canon xxxii.

That

"That eternal life ought to be propoſed to the children of God, both as a grace mercifully promiſed, and as a reward faithfully beſtowed on them for their good works and merits *."

"That the good works of a juſtified perſon are not ſo the gifts of God, that they are not alſo the merits of the juſtified perſon; and that he being juſtified by the good works performed by him through the grace of God and merits of Jeſus Chriſt, whoſe living member he is, does truly merit increaſe of grace and eternal life †. A learned prelate obſerves they ſpeak ſo uncertainly of this matter, as evidently ſhews, they either knew not themſelves what they would eſtabliſh, or were unwilling others ſhould know it ‖."

Dr. Allix, one of their champions, tells us, "that *Vega*, who wrote his books of juſtification during the time he was at the council, maintains that the council by truly meriting did underſtand meriting *de Condigno* §.

And Maldenate the Jeſuit, alſo, aſſerts, that we do as truly and properly, when we do well through God's grace, merit rewards, as we do deſerve puniſhment when we do ill **.

Cardinal Bellarmine expreſsly aſſerts, that our good works do merit, *ex Condigno*, eternal life, and not only by reaſon of God's covenant, but alſo by reaſon of the work itſelf ††.

But Boſſuet, on the doctrine of merit, obſerves, that the church profeſſes her hope of ſalvation to be founded in Chriſt alone. "We openly declare, ſays he, that we cannot be acceptable to God but in and through Jeſus Chriſt; nor do we apprehend how any other ſenſe can be imputed to our belief, of which our daily petition

* Boſſuet's Expoſition of the Catholic Catechiſm.
† Seſſion vi. Canon xxxii.
‖ Archbiſhop Wake.
§ See the Index Expurgatorius, publiſhed in 1584.
** Clarkſon's Morning Exerciſe, p. 407.
†† Bellarmine de Juſt, lib. v. cap. xvii.

to God for pardon, through his grace, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, may ſerve as a proof ‖ ‖

Art. XVII. *I do alſo profeſs, that in the maſs there is offered unto God, a true, proper, and propitiatory ſacrifice for the quick and the dead; and that, in the moſt holy ſacrament of the euchariſt, there is truly, really, and ſubſtantially, the body and blood, together with the ſoul and divinity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; and that there is a converſion made of the whole ſubſtance of the bread into the body, and of the whole ſubſtance of the wine into the blood; which converſion the whole Catholic church call Tranſubſtantiation.*

Thus Bellarmine aſſerts, "that the celebration of the paſſover was an expreſs figure of the euchariſt; but the paſſover was a ſacrifice; therefore the euchariſt muſt be ſo too.—That if Chriſt be a prieſt for ever, the rite of ſacrificing muſt continue for ever. But there can be no ſacrifice, if we deſtroy that of the maſs*.

Therefore N. C. ſays, that the whole ſubſtance of the bread and wine, after conſecration, is changed into the body and blood of Chriſt, without any alteration in the accidents or outward forms. He adds, The words on which tranſubſtantiation is founded, are theſe, *This is my body, which is given for you*, Luke xxii. 19. Now that theſe words are to be taken in a literal ſenſe, nothing can be more plain, both from Chriſt's promiſe of giving his body, and from St. Paul's words, 1 Cor. x. 16. and 1 Cor. xi. 27.

This ſacrifice was only ordained as a repreſentation of that, which was once accompliſhed on the croſs, to perpetuate the memory of it for ever, and to apply unto us the ſalutary virtue of it for the abſolution of thoſe ſins, which we daily commit †.

If we aſk the author of the Catholic Chriſtian Inſtructed, How can the accidents of bread and wine

‖ ‖ Picart, vol. i. p. 260, where the quotations are larger.

* Bellarmine de Miſſa, l. i. c. 7.

† Modeſt and True Account of the chief Points in Controverſy, p. 108. See Chandler's Notes of the Church, p. 42.

remain

remain without the ſubſtance, or the whole body and blood of Chriſt, be contained in ſo ſmall a ſpace as that of the hoſt, nay even in the ſmalleſt ſenſible particle of it? or the body of Chriſt be both in heaven, and at the ſame time in ſo many places upon earth? He will ſay, By the almighty power of God, which is incomprehenſible as himſelf; the immenſe depth of which cannot be fathomed by the ſhort line and plummet of human reaſon ‡.

The catholic chriſtian urges, in ſupport of this doctrine, that our church catechiſm, in anſwer to the queſtion, What is the inward part or thing ſignified? ſays, The body and blood of Chriſt, which is verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's ſupper §.

And the council of Trent, effectually to extirpate all hereſies and heretics out of the church relating to this point, declares *, that, if any one ſays, that a true and proper ſacrifice is not offered up to God at the maſs, or that to be offered is any thing elſe than Jeſus Chriſt given to be eaten, let him be anathema.

Canon III. If any one ſays, that the ſacrifice of the maſs is only a ſacrifice of praiſe and thankſgiving, or a bare memorial of the ſacrifice, which was completed upon the croſs, and that it is not propitiatory nor profitable to any but him that receives it, and that it ought not to be offered for the living and for the dead, for their ſins, their puniſhments, their ſatisfactions, and their other neceſſities, let him be anathema.

Canon IX. If any one ſays, that the uſage of the church of Rome, to pronounce part of the canon, and the words of conſecration, with a low voice, ought to be condemned; or that the maſs ought only to be celebrated in the vulgar tongue; and that water ought not to be mixed with the wine, which is to be offered in the cup; becauſe it is againſt the inſtitution of Jeſus Chriſt, let him be anathema.

‡ Andrews on Tranſubſtantiation, p. 85. who cites Cath. Chriſtian.
§ Preface to the Catholic Chriſtian.
* Seſſ. 22, Can. 1.

Theſe

Theſe definitions of faith were followed with a decree to enforce them †.

When it is aſked in the catechiſm, What is the catholic doctrine as to the maſs? It is anſwered, The conſecration and oblation of the body and blood of Chriſt, under the ſacramental veils or appearances of bread and wine, wherein is offered a true, proper, and propitiatory ſacrifice for the living and the dead ‡.

The church of Rome declare, that, upon the prieſt's pronouncing theſe words, *Hoc eſt corpus meum*, the bread and wine in the euchariſt are tranſubſtantiated into the natural body and blood of Chriſt, the ſpecies or accidents only of the bread and wine remaining, and have made it an article to be believed under an anathema *.

Cornelius a Lapide tells us, it was the opinion of ſome of their grave divines, that this change is made after ſo powerful and effectual a manner, that, if Chriſt had not been incarnated before, the force of this charm would have incarnated him, and cloathed him with human nature.

That in the ſacrifice of the maſs, Chriſt is offered as often as that is celebrated; and that, though therein he be unbloodily offered, yet it is a true propitiatory ſacrifice for the ſins both of the living and dead, and denounces the perſon accurſed that denies any part of this †.

Solitary maſſes, wherein the prieſt communicates alone, are approved and commended, and whoſoever ſaith they are unlawful, and ought to be abrogated, is accurſed ‖.

Art. XVIII. *And I believe, that under one kind only, whole and entire, Chriſt is taken and received.*

† Dupin's Eccleſ. Hiſt. of the Sixteenth Century, b. iv. ch. xviii.
‡ Grounds of the Catholic Doctrine, p. 31.
* Concil Trident, Seſ. 13 de Real. Proſ.
† Council Trident. Seſ. 22, cap. 1.
‖ Ibid. can. viii. See Diſcourſes of Tranſubſtantiation, 1685; and another of the Real Preſence, printed at Oxford, 1687.

Bread

Bread and wine, after conſecration, are turned into the ſubſtance of Chriſt's body and blood, without changeing the ſpecies.—And the people are forbidden to receive the ſacrament in both kinds *.

The council of Conſtance decreed, that Chriſt did inſtitute this ſacrament in both kinds, and that the faithful in the primitive church did receive in both kinds: yet, that the practice of receiving in one kind was highly reaſonable, they appointed the continuance of conſecration in both kinds, and of giving to the laity only in one kind, ſince Chriſt was entire, and truly under one kind †. And they aſſigned theſe further reaſons, leſt the blood of Chriſt ſhould be ſpilt—leſt the wine kept for the ſick ſhould fret — leſt wine may not always be had—or leſt ſome may not be able to bear the ſmell or taſte.

One would think, ſays a judicious author, that the church of Rome with-held the cup from the people, merely to ſhew their authority and power ‡, in diſpenſeing with, or rather in oppoſing directly, the laws of her profeſſed Lord and Maſter. Let their own words teſtify for them §: "In the name of the holy and undivided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, Amen. This preſent ſacred, general council—declares, decrees, and determines, that although Chriſt inſtituted and adminiſtered to his diſciples this venerable ſacrament after ſupper, under both kinds of bread and wine, yet this, notwithſtanding the laudable authority of ſacred canons, and the approved cuſtom of the church, hath maintained, and doth maintain, that ſuch a ſacrament as this ought not to be made after ſupper, nor to be received by the faithful otherwiſe than faſting, excepting in caſe of infirmity, or other neceſſity granted or admitted by law, or by the church: and ſince, for avoiding ſome dangers and ſcandals, the cuſtom has been

* Conc. Trident. Seſſ. 13.
† Conc. Conſtance, Seſſ. 13, held A. D. 1414.
‡ Rev. Mr. Burroughs's View of Popery, p. 77.
§ Conc. Conſtant. apud M. l'Abbe, tom. xii. p. 100.

rationally

rationally introduced, that tho' this ſacrament was in the primitive church received by the faithful under both kinds, and afterwards by the makers of it under both kinds, and by the laity only under the ſpecies of bread — ſuch a cuſtom as this ought to be accounted a law, which muſt not be rejected, or at pleaſure changed, without the authority of the church. They who aſſert the contrary are to be driven away as heretics, and ſeverely puniſhed by the dioceſans of the places, or their officials, or by the inquiſitors of heretical pravity."

The council of Florence has the following paragraph, in relation both to this and the euchariſt: "The prieſt, ſpeaking in the name of Chriſt, maketh this ſacrament; for, by virtue of the very words themſelves, the bread is changed into the body of Chriſt, and the ſubſtance of the wine into his blood: yet ſo that whole Chriſt is contained under the ſpecies of bread, and whole under the ſpecies of wine; alſo in every part of the conſecrated hoſt and conſecrated wine; when a ſeparation is made, there is whole Chriſt ‖.

Art. XIX. *I do firmly believe, that there is a purgatory, and that the ſouls kept priſoners there do receive help by the ſuffrage of the faithful*.—That the ſouls of the patriarchs and holy men, who departed this life before the crucifixion of Chriſt, were kept as in priſon, in an apartment of hell, without pain.—That Chriſt did really go into local hell, and delivered the captive ſouls out of this confinement‡.—The fathers aſſert, that our Saviour deſcended into hell, went thither ſpecially, and delivered the ſouls of the fathers out of that manſion§.*

"Bellarmine ſays there is a purgatory after this life, where the ſouls of thoſe that are not purged, nor have ſatisfied for their ſins here, are to be purged, and

‖ L'Abbe Council. tom. xiii. p. 537.
* Pope Pius's Creed, art. xx.
‡ Bellarmine de Chriſto, lib. iv. cap. 11, 12.
§. Rhem. Annot. on Luke xvi. ſ. 7.

give

give ſatisfaction, unleſs their time be ſhortened by the prayers, alms, and maſſes of the living‖."

The council of Trent ſay, that ſouls who die in a ſtate of grace, but are not ſufficiently purged from their ſins, go firſt into purgatory, a place of torment, bordering near upon hell, from which their deliverance may be expedited by the ſuffrages, that is, prayers, alms, and maſſes, ſaid and done by the faithful†.

That ſouls are to continue in purgatory till they have made full ſatisfaction for their ſins, and are thoroughly purged from them; and that whoever ſays that there is no debt of temporal puniſhment to be paid, either in this world or in purgatory, before they can be received into heaven, is accurſed§.

In fine, the catholic church being inſtructed by the Holy Ghoſt, having always taught, purſuant to the holy ſcriptures and the ancient tradition of the fathers, that there is a purgatory, and that the ſouls there detained are comforted by the ſuffrages of the faithful, eſpecially by the acceptable ſacrifice of the altar. The holy council commandeth biſhops to take particular care that the faith and belief of the faithful, concerning purgatory, conformable to the holy doctrine handed down to us by holy fathers and holy councils, be believed and every where ſo taught and preached‡.

And if any ſhall ſay,

Art. XX. *I do believe that the ſaints reigning together with Chriſt are to be worſhipped and prayed unto, and that they do offer prayers unto God for us, and that their relics are to be had in veneration* *.

(I do not, I would not, charge the papiſts with believing angels or ſaints to be their redeemers, nor do I imagine that they pray to them as ſuch.)

‖ Trident. ſeſſ. xxv.

† Bellarmine de Purgat. lib. ii. c. vi.

§ Concil. Trident, ſeſſ. vi. can. xxx.

‡ The decree of the council at the opening the 25th ſeſſ. See Earl's Sermon, Salters Hall.

* Pope Pius's Creed, article XX.

But

But every catholic is taught that angels are to be worſhipped and invoked, becauſe they are always in the preſence of God, and moſt willingly take upon themſelves the defence of our ſafety, which is committed to them †. They are taught that in honouring ſaints who ſleep in the Lord, in invoking them, in reverencing their ſacred relics and aſhes, the glory of God is ſo far from being leſſened that it is greatly increaſed ‡; that they are to be worſhipped and invoked, becauſe they conſtantly pray to God for the ſalvation of men ‖.

In the church of Rome they pray to ſaints and angels as their interceſſors §.

The church of Rome ſays, that angels and ſaints are to be worſhipped and prayed unto, though with an inferior kind of worſhip than is paid to God ‖ ‖.

That it is good and profitable to pray to ſaints and angels § §.

The church of Rome requires that due worſhip and veneration be given to them, ſuch as kiſſing, uncovering the head, and falling down before them, and denounces a curſe againſt thoſe who think otherwiſe † †.

In anſwer to this queſtion * *, What is the catholic doctrine touching the veneration and invocation of ſaints?

The anſwer is, We are taught, 1ſt, That there is an honour and veneration due to the angels and ſaints; 2d, That they offer prayers to God for us; 3d, That it is good and profitable to invoke them, that is, to have recourſe to their interceſſion and prayers; 4th, That their relics are to be had in veneration.

† Catechiſm ad Paroch. ſect. xix.
‡ Sect. xx.
‖ Sect. xxiv.
§ Trident. ſeſſion xxv. Catechiſm. Rom. par. iv. c. ix.
‖ ‖ Catechiſm Rom. par. iii. c. ii. p. 89.
§ § Council of Trident. ſeſſion xxv. de Invocat.
† † Ibid. and Catechiſm Rom. par. iii. c. ii. p. 24.
* * Grounds of the Catholic Doctrine, p. 37, 38.

When

When the reaſon of it is aſked, the anſwer is, Becauſe the church, in all ages, has paid this honour and veneration to the ſaints, by erecting churches and keeping holidays in their memory: a practice which the Engliſh proteſtants have alſo retained.

The church, ſays Boſſuet, in his Expoſition on the Creed, in telling of us, that it is beneficial to pray to the ſaints, teaches us to pray to them in that ſpirit of charity, and according to that order of brotherly love, which inclines us to requeſt the aſſiſtance of our brethren living upon earth; and the catechiſm of the council of Trent teaches us to beg of them to be our advocates, only uſing this phraſe, *Pray for us.* And in vindication of this their ſentiment and practice they alledge, that the church of England ſtill retains this collect upon the day of St. Michael and All Angels: "O! everlaſting God, who haſt ordained and conſtituted the ſervice of angels in a wonderful order, mercifully grant, that as thy holy angels always do thee ſervice in heaven, ſo by thy appointment they may ſuccour and defend us on earth *."

Art. XXI. *I do firmly believe that the images of Chriſt, of the bleſſed Virgin, the mother of God, and of other ſaints, ought to be had and retained, and that due honour and veneration ought to be paid unto them* §.

The miniſter ſhall teach the people, that images of ſaints are to be placed in churches, that they may be likewiſe worſhipped ‡. If any doubt ariſes about the meaning of the word Worſhip, when applied to images, he, the miniſter, ſhall teach them, that images were made to inſtruct them in the hiſtory of both Teſtaments, and to refreſh their memories; for being excited by the remembrance of divine things, they excite more ſtrongly to worſhip God himſelf §.

It muſt be owned, that the papiſts contend, that images are not to be worſhipped as God; and that you

* Plain and Rational Account of the Catholic Faith, p. 48.
§ Pope Pius's Creed, art. xxi.
‡ Cat. ad Paroch. part iii. ſect. 4. § Ibid.

are

are not to imagine there is divinity in them. The honour, or worſhip, they ſay, is to be referred to the prototype; and with reſpect to the virgin Mary, they are not charged with worſhipping her, or putting their truſt in her, as much as in God, but, ſtrictly ſpeaking, with paying her divine worſhip. The breviaries are full of examples of ſuch honours paid to her. In the little office of the bleſſed Mary, ſhe is deſired to looſe the bonds of the guilty—drive away evils from us—demand all good things for us—make us chaſte—protect us from the enemy—receive us at the hour of death. She is ſet forth in the expreſs language of their liturgies, miſſals, and breviaries at Rome, as the mother of mercy, hope of the world, and the only truſt of ſinners; and the ſaints addreſſed under the title of interceſſors, protectors, and diſpenſers of grace.

Biſhop Stillingfleet ſays, the council of Nice defined true and real worſhip to be given to images, i. e. that images were not only to be ſigns and helps to memory, to call to mind, and repreſent to us, the object of worſhip, but that the acts of worſhip were to be paid to the images themſelves. The former uſe of images doth ſuppoſe them to be only of the nature of books, which repreſent things to our minds, without any act of adoration performed to that, which is only an inſtrument of intellection, although the thing repreſented to the mind be a proper object of adoration *. But thoſe who go no farther ſtand condemned and anathematized by the ſecond council of Nice. For images are not only to be placed in temples, but alſo to be worſhipped as if the perſons repreſented thereby were preſent ‡.

All the devotion paid to their ſaints extends no farther than to deſire their prayers, and that the pictures and images of them, which we ſee in their

* Biſhop Stillingfleet's Diſcourſe of Idolatry, p. 575.

‡ Trident. Seſſ. xxv. Catech. Rom. Par. iv. c. vi. p. 4.

churches,

churches, are no more than mere memorials, designed to express the esteem which they retain for the persons so represented, or as helps to raise their affections to heavenly things, and that every child amongst them knows this to be true §.

Art. XXII. *I do affirm, that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the church, and that the use of them is very beneficial to Christian people* ‖.

The council of Trent proposes nothing more relative to indulgences, according to Monsr. Bossuet; but that the church had the power of granting them from Jesus Christ, and that the practice of them is wholesome; which custom, that council adds, ought still to be preserved, though with moderation, lest ecclesiastical discipline should be weakened by too great a toleration.

By indulgences granted by the popes and prelates of the church, persons are discharged from temporal punishment here and in purgatory *.

The dispensing power of indulgences extends not only to the worst crimes, but the priests have power according as they please to grant indulgence for any time, and to give absolution according to their own pleasure. Thus in an indulgence granted by Clement VI. in the year 1351, to the king and queen of France, and their successors, which we shall produce in the pope's own words, transcribed from *D'Achery's Spicilegium*; the English translation of which is as follows §.

"CLEMENT, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our most dear children in Christ, John and Joan, the illustrious king and queen of France, greet-

§ See Mr. Hugh's Serm. Salters Hall, on the Veneration of Saints and Images.

‖ Pope Pius's Creed, art. xxii.

* Trident Sess. xxv. Bull, p. ii. 4.

§ See Burroughs's View of Pope Pius's Creed, p. 157.

ing, and apoſtolical benediction: Your deſign we readily agree to, thoſe eſpecially by which ye may obtain from a propitious God, as ye piouſly requeſt, peace and health of ſoul: hence it is, that we, inclining to your ſupplications, do, by apoſtolical authority, by the tenor of theſe preſents, for ever, indulge to you, and your ſucceſſors, who for the time being ſhall be kings and queens of France, and to every of you, and them, that ſuch confeſſor, religious or ſecular, as any of you or them ſhall think fit to chuſe, may commute for you and them, ſuch vows as perhaps you may have made already, or which by you and your ſucceſſors may be hereafter made, (the ultramarine vow, and that of the bleſſed apoſtles, Peter and Paul, and that of chaſtity and continency, only excepted), and alſo ſuch oaths by you taken, or by you and them hereafter to be taken, as you and they cannot commodiouſly keep, into other works of piety, according as he ſhall ſee expedient, for the health of your and their ſouls, and agreeable to God. Be it therefore utterly unlawful for any man whatever, to infringe this our grant, or by a raſh adventure, to proceed in oppoſition to it; but if any ſhall preſume to attempt this, let him know, that he ſhall incur the indignation of Almighty God, and of his bleſſed apoſtles, Peter and Paul.

"Given at Avignon, the 19th of April, in our ninth year."

Art. XXIII. *I do acknowledge the holy catholic and apoſtolic Roman church to be the mother and miſtreſs of all churches; and I do promiſe and ſwear true obedience to the biſhop of Rome, the ſucceſſor of St. Peter, the prince of the apoſtles, and vicar of Jeſus Chriſt* *.

2. *Propoſed* †. What is the catholic doctrine as to the pope's ſupremacy.

* Pope Pius's Creed, Art. XXIII.

† The Grounds of the Catholic Faith, p. 51, 52. Compare this with the hiſtory of the church in the 17th century.

A. I. That St. Peter was head of the church under Chriſt.

II. That the pope, or biſhop of Rome, is at preſent head of the church, and Chriſt's vicar upon earth.

Q. How do you prove theſe propoſitions?

A. By the unanimous conſent of the fathers, and the tradition of the church, the biſhops of Rome are the ſucceſſors of St. Peter, who tranſlated his chair from Antioch to Rome, and died biſhop of Rome. Hence the ſee of Rome, in all ages, is called the ſee of Peter, the chair of Peter, and abſolutely the ſee apoſtolic; and in that quality has, from the beginning, exerciſed juriſdiction over all other churches, as appears from the beſt records of ancient church hiſtory.

Q. Why do you call the Romiſh church the mother and miſtreſs of all churches?

A. Becauſe her biſhop is St. Peter's ſucceſſor, and Chriſt's vicar upon earth, and conſequently the father and paſtor of all the faithful; and therefore this church, as being St. Peter's ſee, is the mother and miſtreſs of all churches.

Under this explanation we find the belief of it declared to be neceſſary to ſalvation. So ſays the concluſion of this creed, confirmed by pope Pius V. And to the ſame purpoſe, Boniface VIII. in his canon law, aſſerts and decrees; "Moreover we declare, and ſay, and define, and pronounce to every human creature, that it is altogether neceſſary to ſalvation, to be ſubject to the Roman pontiff *."

Though it is not immediately under my notice to examine the real merit of tranſubſtantiation, I ſhall conclude this article with the mention of one argument, urged by the catholic Chriſtians for it, which, if it has any force, muſt be allowed indeed to be concluſive. "That the unerring authority of the church has declared it to be true, and enjoined the belief of it, (and

* Lib. i. tit. 8. cap. i.

after ſuch a deciſion) that it is the part of an infidel, rather than a Chriſtian, to aſk, how can this be †?" This implicit faith to the authority of the church, our author declares to be the indiſpenſible duty of every Chriſtian.

Art. XXIV. *I do undoubtedly receive and profeſs all others things that have been delivered, defined, by the ſacred canons and oecumenical councils, and eſpecially by the holy ſynod of Trent, and all other things contrary hereunto; and all hereſies condemned, rejected, and anathematized, by the church, I do likewiſe condemn, reject, and anathematize.*

This bull (as they call it) bears date on the ides of November 1564, and concludes in the uſual manner, with threats of the indignation of God, and of his bleſſed apoſtles St. Peter and St. Paul, againſt all that infringe or oppoſe it.

And every reader, I ſuppoſe, diſcerns, that this is not merely a confeſſion of faith, but likewiſe a ſolemn oath; and ſo the title of it bears, *A bull concerning the form of an oath of profeſſion of faith*; which faith all eccleſiaſtical perſons, whether ſecular or regular, as they diſtinguiſh them, and all military orders, are obliged to take—As follows: "This true catholic faith, without which no one can be ſaved, which at this preſent time I do, of my own accord, profeſs, and ſincerely hold, I, the ſame N. N. do promiſe and vow, and ſwear, God aſſiſting me, moſt conſtantly to retain and confeſs, entire and unviolated, to the laſt breath of my life, and ſo far as in me lies. I will likewiſe take care, that it ſhall be held, taught, and preached by my ſubjects, or thoſe the care of whom belongs to me, in the diſcharge of my office."—And it is as eaſy to obſerve, that this is perfectly new, both as an oath and as a profeſſion of faith, never was there any ſuch creed impoſed before, or ſo much as framed, much leſs tied upon men by an oath. For when theſe fathers met at Trent, and were to make a profeſſion of faith by rehearſing the creed, which the Roman church uſes,

† See Catholic Chriſtian, p. 32, 47, 52, 57.

ſo

ſo the words are *, they could find none to profeſs, but the Nicene creed: no larger creed was in uſe, no, not even in the Roman church; but theſe very men, who afterwards turned new creed-makers, were forced to be content with that.

Though this creed is aſſerted to be the true catholic faith, it is in no ſenſe catholic, as to place, nor time; for it was no where uſed till they made it, no not there, nor is now every where believed, and was not, in the additional articles to the Nicene creed, believed in any church for above 1500 years; nor now uſed in that church itſelf, when they admit members into the catholic church by baptiſm; but they are ſaid to be put into a ſtate of ſalvation, by their profeſſing to believe the Nicene creed alone: which is a direct contradiction to the terms of this creed, wherein are included the doctrines of tranſubſtantiation, worſhipping images, the ſeven ſacraments, traditions, and other conſtitutions of the Romiſh church, there declared to be neceſſary to ſalvation †.

The council of Conſtance declares, that they being a general council, lawfully congregated in the Holy Ghoſt, and repreſenting the catholic church, it has power immediately from Chriſt, which every one, of whatſoever ſtate, or dignity, even the papal, is obliged to obey in things appertaining to faith, &c. or ſuffer condign puniſhment §.

This creed is peculiarly adapted to the genius and ſpirit of popery, and to the particular views of this council, requiring, *That all things which have been delivered, defined, and declared, by the ſacred canons of this ſynod be received and believed without doubting*; an aſſent ſo full and implicit can ſcarce be complied with by any reaſonable agent. But even this believing is not enough; if you do not condemn and anathematize all, that under the character of unbelievers are condemned, and anathematized by the church. And what is the

* Seſſ. 3.
† Dr. Patrick's (ſince biſhop of Ely) Pillar and Ground of Faith.
§ Seſſ. v.

conſequence of that? Why, if he is a heretic, and condemned by the church, he muſt be treated as an heretic, and ſubjected to all the puniſhments which the church decrees ſhould be inflicted on them *. From theſe doctrines, taught and inculcated by the church of Rome, have ſtreamed forth the impious doctrine of ſubjects renouncing allegiance to ſuch princes as would not obey the pope, and even of murdering them and all their adherents.

Out of the numerous particulars, which the Romaniſts profeſs without doubting to receive, I ſhall make only one quotation from the great Lateran, holden by pope Innocent III. in the year 1215. It is made a part of the canon law †, and according to the literal tranſlation of it into Engliſh is as follows:

"We excommunicate, anathematize, all hereſy, which lifts up itſelf againſt this holy, orthodox, and catholic faith, which we have ſet forth, condemning all heretics, by what names ſoever they be reckoned. Let thoſe who are condemned be left to the ſecular powers in being, or their bailiffs, to be by them puniſhed with due animadverſion; they of the clergy being firſt degraded from their orders; ſo that the goods of thoſe condemned, if they be of the laity, be confiſcated; if of the clergy, applied to thoſe churches from which they received ſtipends: as for thoſe who ſhall be found only marked with the ſuſpicion of hereſy, if they do not, according to the conſideration of the ſuſpicion, and the quality of the perſon, prove their own innocency by a ſuitable purgation, let them be ſmitten with the ſword of anathema, and, till they give a fitting ſatisfaction, be avoided by all, ſo that, if they remain a whole year under excommunication, they be from that time condemned as heretics: but let all ſecular powers, whatever offices they exerciſe, be admoniſhed and induced, and if need be, let

* See Burroughs's View of Pope Pius's Creed, p. 135.

† Decret. Gregor. lib. v. tit. vii. cap. xiii. See Burroughs's View of Pope Pius's Creed, p. 136, 137, 138. See the Article Perſecution.

them

them by the cenſures of the church be compelled, as ever they wiſh to be accounted faithful, for the defence of the faith, publicly to take an oath, that they will, *bona fide*, according to their power, endeavour to exterminate heretics, marked out by the church, from all the lands ſubject to their juriſdiction, ſo that from the time when any one ſhall be advanced into power, whether perpetual or temporal, he ſhall be obliged to confirm this matter with an oath: but if the temporal lord, being thereunto by the church required and admoniſhed, ſhall neglect to purge his territory from this heretical defilement, let him, by the metropolitan and the reſt of the biſhops of the province, be tied up in the bond of excommunication; and if he diſdain to make ſatisfaction, let this within the year be ſignified to the pope, that from that time he may denounce his vaſſals to be abſolved from fidelity to him, and expoſe his country to be occupied by catholics, that they, having exterminated the heretics, may without any contradiction profeſs it and keep it in the purity of the faith, with a ſalvo to the right of the principal poſſeſſor, provided that he yield no obſtacle in this affair, nor ſet up any impediment: the ſame law, however, to be obſerved with regard to ſuch as have principal lords; and as for thoſe catholics, who, taking the badge of the croſs, ſhall ſet themſelves to the rooting out of heretics, they ſhall be favoured with the ſame indulgence, and fortified with the ſame holy privileges, which are granted to thoſe who go to the aid of the Holy-Land *."

There is a variety of things in this decree which deſerve our notice. Firſt, that all thoſe in general are condemned as heretics, who venture to oppoſe what the pope and his council pronounce to be the holy, orthodox, and catholic faith; then that the poor condemned heretics are delivered over to the ſecular powers to be by them puniſhed with due animadverſion; the firſt act of which is ordered to be a deprivation of all worldly ſub-

* Rev. Mr. Burroughs's View of Popery, p. 136. who quotes Decret. Gregor. lib. v. tit. vii. cap. xiii.

ſtanee. All princes are obliged to take a ſolemn oath that they will exterminate heretics out of their dominions. — The people are likewiſe by this decree expoſed to intolerable ſlavery before they are delivered over to deſtruction, by being made ſubject to anathema when only marked with a ſuſpicion of hereſy, and if they do not prove their innocency by what the prieſt ſhall account a ſufficient purgation, they are to be avoided by all. Thus left at the mercy of the prieſt, who for want of receiving ſuch ſatisfaction as he ſhall judge proper, can direct and oblige the magiſtrate to deprive them of ſubſtance and liberty, and even life itſelf.

The following judicious reflections on pope Pius's creed, by the Rev. Mr. Burroughs, may not be unacceptable to our readers. "Let any man, who has ever read the New Teſtament, judge what likeneſs there is, between the doctrine of pope Pius's creed, and that which was taught by our bleſſed Lord and his apoſtles. Nay, let any man of ſober thought, whether he has read the ſcriptures or not, judge whether it is poſſible, that ſuch a religion ſhould ever come from God, as that which the church of Rome tells you is neceſſary to ſalvation.

The doctrine of Chriſt and his apoſtles teaches us the higheſt veneration of the one living and true God, the wiſe and righteous and gracious governor of the world, and the moſt ardent affection to him as our beſt friend and benefactor: and directs and encourages us to ſeek of him, with a full aſſurance of faith, every needful bleſſing, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, the only mediator between God and men. It requires of us righteouſneſs and equity in our whole conduct towards thoſe with whom we have to do; and very particularly recommends a mutual forbearance and affectionate tenderneſs among Chriſtian brethren, with regard to the miſapprehenſions and miſtakes into which they may fall. And, as any religion muſt do which comes from God, it lays a very great ſtreſs upon a ſober, temperate courſe

of

of life; excluding from the kingdom of heaven thoſe who allow themſelves in the contrary courſe.

But in the preceding papers we have ſeen, that the religion of the church of Rome oppoſes that of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in all theſe reſpects, though it pretends in every one of them to adhere to it. The papiſts profeſs indeed to acknowledge one only living and true God: yet at the ſame time it is notorious, that they pay more real worſhip and adoration to angels and ſaints, and even to images, than to him. And to keep up this practice, ſuch thoughts are ſuggeſted to the people's minds concerning the divine being, as are altogether unworthy of him, and inconſiſtent with the honour of the one and only mediator, in whoſe name we are directed to addreſs him. Nay, the multiplicity of the prayers themſelves, which are addreſſed to ſaints and angels, begging for their interceſſion, tends to make the people think concerning the kindeſt and moſt benevolent being in the world, that he is almoſt inexorable, and that nothing but continual importunity will prevail with him for any favour: whereas the mediation of Chriſt, as ſtated in the New Teſtament, teaches no ſuch thing; but encourages us, ſinners as we are, to go directly to God in *his* name, *in whom* he has declared himſelf to be *well pleaſed.* But this one mediator is by the church of Rome overlooked, in a croud of others of her own making.

Then, inſtead of a ſtrict regard to righteouſneſs, and ſobriety, the doctrines of indulgences and purgatory, and ſo likewiſe that of abſolution, upon confeſſion and ſatisfaction at the will and pleaſure of the prieſt, encourage all manner of vice and wickedneſs: ſince, according to theſe doctrines, a man may buy off any puniſhment, if he ſurvives the wicked actions he reſolves upon; or, at the worſt, can have them bought off when he is dead, if he has but money enough to leave behind him.

As to forbearance and brotherly kindneſs; the church of Rome is a ſworn enemy to theſe Chriſtian virtues.

She

She will not bear the leaſt deviation from her own traditions, decrees, and canons. She makes them all *neceſſary to ſalvation*, both in this life, and that which is to come; preſumptuouſly denouncing eternal damnation to thoſe who do not punctually obſerve and obey them; and cruelly deſtroying ſuch of them as ſhe can get into her own power.

What good pretenſions the church of Rome has to be the church of Chriſt, ſhe ſhews by ſetting up another head over the church beſides Chriſt, inconſiſtently with his legiſlative authority, and contrary to his own expreſs direction.

How little value ſhe has for the ſcripture, ſhe ſhews by ſetting up her own traditions upon an equal footing with it. And by the ſame means, and by claiming the ſole authority of interpreting ſcripture, ſhe prevents, as much as in her lies, its being of any uſe to the people, even when they can get a ſight of their Bibles, which for the moſt part is forbidden. She will not ſuffer them to exerciſe their reaſon in judging of that revelation, which ſhe tells them God has given for their direction. No: if you will be a true member of this church, you muſt give up your reaſon, and even the teſtimony of your ſenſes too; as appears notoriouſly in the affair of tranſubſtantiation. And yet it is evident, that our bleſſed Lord himſelf frequently appealed to the judgement and conſcience of his hearers, concerning the goodneſs and divine original of his doctrine; and always to their ſenſes, as often as he wrought any miracles.

How deſtructive to all the views of true religion is the ſtreſs which popery lays upon external ſervices, to the neglect of what is inward and pertaining to the conſcience; and how fatally this tends to harden men in their ſins, and to make them reſolve againſt the irkſome work of ſubduing ill habits, and labouring after thoſe which are truly good; is too viſible to need a demonſtration.

How abſolutely this corrupt church is reſolved upon maintaining a dominion over mens conſciences, and what

what cruel meaſures ſhe takes for that purpoſe, has been ſufficiently ſhewn. How contrary this domineering and cruel ſpirit is to the humble and peaceful ſpirit of Chriſtianity, needs no proof, to thoſe who have any acquaintance with the books of the New Teſtament. And how inconſiſtent it is with the peace of civil government, and even with the ſafety of thoſe, whether governors or people, who refuſe to put themſelves entirely into the prieſts power; is not only evident in the nature of the thing, but notorious from hiſtory, in all thoſe caſes where the prieſts have thought it worth their while to try their ſtrength†."

It is farther neceſſary to obſerve, that as the Roman catholics are ſenſible how juſtly theſe articles in their plain and obvious ſenſe are objected to, and cenſured by proteſtants, with the expoſitions and confirmations of them by councils, &c. they have endeavoured to evade their literal ſenſe, and to give a more plauſible and ambiguous form of expreſſion in their room. The moſt remarkable piece of this kind is entitled, "A Vindication of the Roman Catholics," being a moſt ſolemn declaration of their utter abhorrence of the following tenets, vulgarly laid at their door, printed at London at the beginning of king James's reign, and reprinted in 1743, when an invaſion was deſigned againſt England by the pretender. It was calculated to introduce popery, by making it appear, that popery was not that horrid antichriſtian thing, but in its own nature mild and gentle, and as fair as truth itſelf. The author, and the preſent editor, ſay, that if the enſuing curſes be added to thoſe appointed to be read on the firſt day of Lent, "they will ſeriouſly and heartily anſwer *Amen* to them all."

I. *Curſed is he that commits idolatry, that prays to images or relicks, or worſhips them for gods.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

Notwithſtanding the readineſs of the Roman catholics to oblige themſelves to anſwer *Amen* to this curſe, yet it may be worth enquiring how far they are guilty

† Rev. Mr. Burrough's View of Popery, p. 143, 144, 145, 146.

of

of this crime. Idolatry conſiſts in the acknowledgement of authority and dominion in ſome inviſible being or beings over us, which they have not. If this be attributed to ſaints and angels, it is idolatry.

II. *Curſed is every goddeſs worſhipper, that believes the Virgin Mary to be any more than a creature; that honours her, worſhips her, or puts his truſt in her as much as in God; that believes her above her Son, or that ſhe can in any thing command him.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

You are not charged with believing the Virgin Mary to be more than a creature, nor with worſhipping her, or putting truſt in her, as much as in God, but with worſhipping her. Whether it be more or leſs, or as much as God, is not the point; but whether ſhe ought at all to be worſhipped. The papiſts are charged with giving undue honour and worſhip to, and truſt in her; an honour which has not the countenance of one ſingle paſſage in ſcripture, much leſs command to do it.

III. *Curſed is he that believes the angels or ſaints in heaven to be his redeemers, that prays to them as ſuch, or that gives God's honour to them, or to any creature whatever.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

I do not, I would not, charge the papiſts with believing angels or ſaints to be their redeemers, nor do I imagine that they pray to them as ſuch; what they are to be charged with is, praying to ſaints, praying to beings who are ſuppoſed ready and able to help them, without any grounds from revelation, without knowing that they have authority over us, without knowing that they can hear us, without knowing that they are permitted to help us, or intercede for us.

IV. *Curſed is he that worſhips any breaden god, or makes gods of the empty elements of bread and wine.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

In this, as in all the other preceding points, there is an equivocation. May we not word the curſe thus—

Curſed

Curſed is he that worſhips that which before it was conſecrated was bread and wine, and after conſecration ſeems to all our ſenſes to retain the ſubſtance of bread and wine? If this were the caſe, it would be worſhipping a breaden god. What then is the difference between the conſecrated bread, and the ſame bread unconſecrated? You tell us of a change made in the elements by conſecration, and that what before was bread is now Chriſt himſelf.

V. *Curſed is he that believes that prieſts can forgive ſins, whether the ſinner repents or no; or that there is any power in earth or heaven that can forgive ſins, without a hearty repentance and ſerious purpoſe of amendment.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

In anſwer to this I obſerve, that our author ſuppoſes that prieſts can forgive ſins, if the ſinner does repent; he ſuppoſes likewiſe, that the ſinner is a believer in Chriſt, and that the prieſt can forgive ſuch a ſinner if he repents: now a prieſt that pretends to forgive the ſins of a repenting Chriſtian, aſſumes to himſelf a power or privilege which can never be proved to be given to him. Who can forgive ſins but God alone, againſt whom they are committed? If therefore any prieſts aſſume to themſelves a power over Chriſtians to forgive them their ſins, they tranſgreſs the law of Chriſt under the cover of his words, which they pervert to uſes of their own.

VI. *Curſed is he that believes that prieſts can give preſent abſolution to any perſons for ſins they may commit in time to come.* Reſp. *Amen.*

"This curſe, I ſuppoſe, is added by the editor, that it is an article of the catholic faith, to believe that no power on earth can licence men to lye, forſwear, and perjure themſelves, to maſſacre their neighbours, or deſtroy their native country, on pretence of promoting the catholic cauſe or religion." But this is far from being clear. Suppoſe your neighbour, or thoſe of your native country, to be heretics, what is the catholic faith, or catholic practice, in this caſe? Is it not

expreſsly declared ‡, that no prejudice or impediment can or ought to ariſe to the catholic faith, or eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction, by any acts of kings, that may hinder the eccleſiaſtical judge to proceed and puniſh the heretic, if he refuſes to retract? and is it not the catholic faith and practice to order‖ all princes and ſtates, &c. not to permit known heretics to preach within their diſtricts, to have any lodging or houſe, to engage in contracts, to uſe any trade, or to have the comforts of humanity with the faithful in Chriſt? and if they die, are they not denied Chriſtian burial?*

VII. *Curſed is he that believes there is authority in the pope, or any other that can give leave to commit ſins, or that can forgive him his ſins for a ſum of money.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

That the pope pretends to forgive ſomething for a ſum of money. is not, I think, diſowned; that he intends to give leave to commit ſins, or that he forgives ſins for a ſum of money, is here denied. But it will be aſked, What is the intent and deſign of indulgences, plenary indulgences, indulgences for 1000 or 10,000 years? What, are thoſe inſtruments of indulgence not only to a man's ſelf, but to all his family and relations for three generations incluſive†.

VIII. *Curſed is he that believes, that, independent of the merits and paſſion of Chriſt, he can merit ſalvation by his own good works, or make condign ſatisfaction for the guilt of his ſins, or the pains eternal due to them.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

If this be ſo, then there is no ſurplus of good works in any of the ſaints; in conſequence, no ſpiritual treaſure of the church, no works of ſupererogation; for, if there were, a man might merit ſalvation by his own good works, and make condign ſatisfaction for the guilt of his ſins; and then the queſtion is, How far a man may merit ſalvation?

‡ Council Conſtan. ſeſſ. xix.
‖ Ibid. p. 56.
* Ibid. ſeſſ. xx. xxxv. † See p. 161.

IX.

IX. *Curſed is he that contemns the word of God, or hides it from the people, on deſign to keep them from the knowledge of their duty, and to preſerve them in ignorance and error.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

This is an evaſive account of the papiſts hiding the ſcriptures from the people. The queſtion is, Why are the ſcriptures kept at all from the people? And the anſwer is, That they do not keep them for this or that particular purpoſe. It may be ſo; but you may have other purpoſes, other ends, other deſigns, all bad in themſelves, at the ſame time that you profeſs to hide the ſcriptures from the people, not on deſign to keep them in ignorance.

X. *Curſed is he that undervalues the word of God, or that, forſaking ſcripture, chooſes rather to follow human tradition than it.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

Admit that the papiſts do not deſign to "undervalue the word of God, admit that they do not forſake the ſcripture, admit too that they do not chuſe to follow human traditions rather than it:" yet they may put human traditions upon an equal footing with the ſcriptures: they may join traditions to ſcripture, and make both to be equally obſerved. The council of Trent did this, when it profeſſed to "receive and reverence all the books of both the Old and New Teſtament, ſince God is the one author of both, and alſo traditions, which relate to either faith or manners, as if they were dictated either by word of mouth, by Chriſt, or by the Holy Spirit, and preſerved in a conſtant ſucceſſion in the catholic church." It received them, I ſay, with equal affection of piety and reverence: nay, it pronounced an anathema to all who willingly and wittingly contemned traditions." Now, if the ſcripture alone, and by itſelf, contains the rule of faith, they who join tradition to it to form the rule of faith, undervalues the word of God as not ſufficient of itſelf to give us the rule of faith; and that equal tradition to the ſcriptures

undervalue

undervalue the ſcriptures, becauſe they treat human traditions juſt with the ſame regard as they do the word of God.

XI. *Curſed is he that leaves the commandments of God to obſerve the conſtitutions of men.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

Suppoſing one were to charge the papiſts, not with abſolute leaving the commandments of God to obſerve the conſtitutions of men, but with obliging men to obſerve the conſtitutions of men equally with the commandments of God; this would be what they could not diſcharge themſelves from. What are their auricular confeſſion, abſolution, penances, but human conſtitutions, not in the word of God? What is made hereſy by their church, and treated with anathemas, excommunications, burnings, tortures, and all the ſevereſt penalties that inhuman cruelty could invent, but ſomething not contained in the word of God, ſomething that is a mere invention of men? But the fact is, that in many inſtances they have left the commandments of God, to obſerve the conſtitutions of men.

XII. *Curſed is he that omits any of the Ten Commandments, or keeps the people from the knowledge of any one of them, to the end they may not have occaſion of diſcovering the truth.*

Reſp. *Amen.*

It is not of any great conſequence, I apprehend, how the Ten Commandments are divided, provided that every one of them be inculcated, and the people are taught their full meaning; but yet the uſual diſtinction is on many accounts preferable, as the reaſon of the prohibition of images is diſtinct from the having other gods, and the coveting of our neighbour's houſe, and coveting his wife and goods, are founded upon the ſame reaſon. The Jews of old underſtood the diviſion of the commandments to be as all proteſtants have made it, and ſo Joſephus has diſtinguiſhed them, Ant. Jud. l. iii. c. iv. and ſo has Philo; both of them expreſsly

expreſsly calling that the *ſecond* commandment which we call ſo.

XIII. *Curſed is he that* preaches *to the people in* unknown tongues, *ſuch as they underſtand not*; *or uſes* other means to keep them in ignorance. R. *Amen.*

It ſhould not have been ſaid,—*that* preaches *to the people in an unknown tongue*; but, that *prays* in an unknown tongue in public aſſemblies. It is well known, that all their public ſervices are in a tongue which the people do not underſtand: can this tend to edification? Or if the prieſt call upon the people to join in certain acts of worſhip, can the people *underſtand* what they are called upon for? They are preſent at the litanies, and other public acts of devotion, which are all performed in *Latin:* can they join in prayer to God, when they know not what is ſaid? Is it to be called *prayer*, when neither the *words*, nor the ſenſe, is ſuch as that the petitioner can know what he prays for? He may indeed be devout, and lift up his heart to God, whilſt the prieſt reads ſomething which is not underſtood. But the apoſtle has obſerved, *If I pray in an* unknown tongue, *my ſpirit prayeth, but my underſtanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will* pray *with the ſpirit, and I will pray with the* underſtanding *alſo—Elſe when thou ſhalt bleſs with the ſpirit, how ſhall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned ſay* Amen *at thy giving of thanks, ſeeing he underſtandeth not what thou ſayeſt?* 1 Cor. xiv. 14, 15, 16. I do not ſay, that this is done with *deſign* to, or for this *end*, that they may *keep the people in ignorance:* but it is an *abſurd*, a *ſenſeleſs* piece of management, which can anſwer no good end.

XIV. *Curſed is he that believes that the* Pope *can give to any, upon any account whatſoever, diſpenſations to lie, or ſwear falſely; or that it is lawful for any at the laſt hour to proteſt himſelf innocent in caſe he be guilty.* R. *Amen.*

How far, and to what particular caſes the Pope's *diſpenſing power* may extend, or he himſelf may apply

it, may be hard to ſay. It is certain, that application has been made to him to grant *diſpenſation* to many within degrees prohibited by the *Levitical* law, and he has claimed this power. Now, if he may diſpenſe with one law of God, he may with equal right diſpenſe with another. He has *diſpenſed* with oaths, nay *abſolved* from oaths: and it is an allowed fact, that he has frequently put this in execution. And this power has never been taken away, or given up, that I have heard.

It is added, "*Curſed is he that* believes it *lawful for* "*any one, at the* laſt *hour, to proteſt himſelf innocent in* "*caſe he be guilty.*" Ay, or at *any* hour. But ſuppoſe a man to be abſolved by a judicial act of prieſtly abſolution from *guilt*, can he then be deemed *guilty?* If he be cleared *a culpa & reatu, from fault and guilt*, why may he not proteſt himſelf innocent? It is true, he cannot do this *if he be guilty*; that is, if he thinks himſelf not free from *guilt:* but where the judge has in form pronounced a man *innocent*, and declared all *guilt* to be removed, the offender has a right to proteſt himſelf *innocent*, and he may be weak enough to believe himſelf to be ſo.

XV. *Curſed is he that* encourages *ſins, or teaches men to defer the amendment of their lives, on preſumption of a* death-bed repentance. R. *Amen.*

The point which ſhould be made good by *Papiſts* is, that their ſacraments of *abſolution* and *extreme unction* do not naturally tend to *encourage ſins*, and lead men to *defer amendment on preſumption of their good effects on a death-bed. Abſolution* pronounced in form, as from *the miniſters of God*, and a ſuppoſed power *in every prieſt to free every one from all kind of ſin, when danger of death appears*, cannot but be an *encouragement* to defer amendment till the laſt hour.

When *extreme unction* is made a ſacrament, and is to be adminiſtered on the death-bed, and it is declared to be for theſe uſes, that it *gives grace which remits ſins, and particularly the lighter ones, commonly called* venial;

venial; *that it frees the ſoul from that weakneſs and languor which it has contracted from ſin, and from the remains of ſin*; that it *adminiſters joy and comfort to the ſouls of the faithful, and ſupplies them with arms and ſtrength to reſiſt the devil, and to break his force.*—When *extreme unction* has all theſe good effects, muſt it not naturally *encourage* men to go on in vice, and to *defer amendment*, when they have ſo good a ſheet-anchor at laſt? It is not knowing mankind, not to ſee this natural effect. So that though he is pronounced accurſed, who *encourages*, that is, exhorts, adviſes, or promotes deſignedly any ſin, or that teaches to defer amendment of life on preſumption of a death-bed repentance; yet if the ordering and general conduct of things is ſuch as tends naturally to this effect, this may be charged with *encouraging*, what the natural reſult of it is; and the debate will be only about the propriety of the word *encourage*, which ſignifies not only *active exciting, but not obſtructing when you ſee the ill effect of an action.*

XVI. *Curſed is he that teaches men that they may be* lawfully drunk *on a Friday, or on any other faſting-day, though they muſt not taſte the leaſt bit of fleſh.* R. *Amen.*

As I never heard of any body that pretended to teach men that they may be lawfully drunk on any day, I look upon this curſe as a mere ſally of zeal: it is enough to remark, that the eating any fleſh is forbidden *abſolutely* by the church; the drinking wine is not ſo, upon their faſting days. The thing I would recommend to the conſideration of all Papiſts is, their departure from ſcripture. Why do they command abſtinence from *fleſh* on ſo many days in every week? Why abſtain from *meats*, which *God hath ordained to be received by all with thankſgiving?* Why is ſuch a faſt enjoined, as may be kept with drinking of *wine*, and other even *ſtronger liquors?* I do not charge them with allowing exceſſes in liquors, but with enjoining ſo many faſt and meagre days, on a *ſpiritual* not *me-*

dicinal account, and this without authority from Chriſt or his apoſtles, nay in direct compliance with that mark that is mentioned as a ſign of an apoſtacy from the faith.

XVII. *Curſed is he who places religion in* nothing but a pompous ſhew, *conſiſting* ONLY in ceremonies, *and which teaches not the people to ſerve God in ſpirit and in truth.*

Here again is a ſad inſtance of chicane. Nobody, I believe, charges the Papiſts with *placing religion* in nothing but *pompous ſhew:* but they are charged with cumbering religion with numerous rites and ceremonies, with proceſſions, pilgrimages, and all the evils ariſing from ſuch ſorts of follies. The doctrines and practices of the goſpel are plain, ſimple, eaſy things; which yet have been ſo loaded, ſo overburdened with ceremonies, that an apoſtle of Chriſt, were he to ariſe and be brought to the baptiſm of any perſon, would not be able to ſay what they were about. Let us ſuppoſe the water conſecrated, the perſon ſtanding at the church-doors forbid to enter into the church, and there cathechized. Then exorciſm is uſed to expel the devil, &c.

XVIII. *Curſed is he who* loves or promotes cruelty; *that teaches people to be* bloody-minded, *and to lay aſide the meekneſs of Jeſus Chriſt.* R. *Amen.*

It is right to diſclaim cruelty and bloody-mindedneſs: but if the people are taught, that heretics may be *killed*; if heretics may be delivered over to the ſecular arm and be burnt; and all are heretics who oppoſe the rights and privileges of the *Roman* church; if they are repreſented ſo odious to God and man, that they may be juſtly deſtroyed; if their deſerving the flames be ſo inculcated, that the people who are ſpectators at an *Auto de Fe*, ſhall look on the perſon condemned by the holy inquiſition, and ſee them carried to the flames without emotion, nay with joy, as if they were murderers or robbers, juſtly condemned, and

deſerving

deſerving the fate they met with :—this is to *promote cruelty*, and *teaching* the people to be *bloody-minded*.

XIX. *Curſed is he who teaches that it is lawful to do any* wicked thing, *though it be for the* intereſt *and* good *of* mother church ; *or that any* evil *action may be done that* good *may come of it*.

What think you of the *lawfulneſs* of deſtroying, rooting out *heretics* by fire, impriſonment for life, and ſuch like inhumanities ? Did the *Romiſh* church ever deem it lawful to keep faith with ſuch, when it could eaſily avoid it? Did not your *church* give ſafe-conduct to *Jerom of Prague*, and yet condemn him and get him burnt ? They denied indeed the validity of the *Emperor*'s ſafe-conduct to *John Huſs*, and becauſe the council did not grant it, it was deemed void. But the council gave it to *Jerom of Prague* ; and yet, becauſe he made a retraction, and repented of his retraction, they found him guilty, and delivered him over to the flames.

XX. *Curſed are we, if, amongſt all thoſe wicked principles and damnable doctrines commonly laid at our doors, every one of them be the* faith of our church ; *and curſed are we, if we do not as heartily deteſt all thoſe helliſh practices, as they that ſo vehemently urge them againſt us.* R. *Amen.*

I have mentioned above, what are the particular tenets which the *Papiſts* are charged with ; and which this author has not endeavoured to vindicate them from. He may pronounce theſe curſes, and yet be guilty of idolatry, falſe worſhip, prayers to ſaints and angels, truſt to prieſtly abſolutions, and indeed offend againſt ſome precepts of the goſpel, or maintain ſome very unjuſtifiable practices, which he may ſeem to condemn, though he really deſigns to abet them. When therefore he adds,

XXI. *Curſed are we, if in anſwering and ſaying* Amen *to any of theſe curſes, we uſe any* equivocation, *or*

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XXI. *Curſed are we, if in anſwering and ſaying* Amen *to any of theſe curſes, we uſe any* equivocation, *or*

mental reſervations; *or do not aſſent to them in the common and obvious ſenſe of the words.* R. *Amen.*

When, I ſay, this is added, I cannot but reply—You may ſay *Amen* to theſe curſes without any equivocation, or mental reſervation, and you may aſſent to them in the obvious ſenſe of the words, and yet you may be guilty of great equivocation in *framing* theſe cauſes, and you may deſign to deceive the ignorant by them. You may ſay very well and very truly, *curſed is he that believes the* Virgin Mary *to be more than a* creature, *or that truſts in her as* much as in God; and yet you may believe in her, worſhip her, honour her, and pray to her. You may curſe them that *believe that prieſts can forgive ſins, whether a ſinner repents or not*; and yet you may maintain, that prieſts act *judicially* in forgiving ſins. You may curſe him that worſhips a *breaden* god, that is, believes a wafer to be a god; and yet let conſecration be added to the wafer, and then you may think it lawful to worſhip what your adverſaries ſtill ſee to be bread, though you think it God. The fault therefore lies in the *framing* theſe curſes; in ſo *wording* them, that ignorant people may be deceived; in concealing the truth of what your doctrines are, at the ſame time that you make converts to your church and miſperſuaded people, and cover that which you dare not openly avow.

Having thus given an account of the doctrine and diſcipline of the Catholic church, according to the articles of Pope Pius's creed, explained and confirmed by a variety of decrees of council, definitions of *popes*, *cardinals*, and many approved authors; and ſuggeſted ſome ſuitable inferences from thence, and then introduced their evaſive repreſentation of many of their articles, though introduced in the form of an anathema; I ſhall cloſe this part with the mention of ſome particular doctrines and practices, taught and defended by them, moſt repugnant to Proteſtant principles, and inſtances of their groſs corruption, viz.

I. *Of*

I. *Of Prayer and Preaching in an unknown Tongue.*

The council of Trent decreed, that divine ſervice ſhould not be performed in the mother tongue *.

The church of Rome doth anathematize all thoſe that hold a vulgar tongue neceſſary to divine ſervice, and doth abſolutely forbid their own miſſal to be ſo tranſlated, and doth perſecute thoſe that have ſo uſed it †. Yet Bellarmine acknowledges it was otherwiſe long after the apoſtles time.

By this means, ſays the author of the Hiſtory of Popery, the common people are deprived of the inſtruction and comfort of God's word in their public worſhip.—The prayers and ſupplications put up to God, are in a language that they know not what is ſaid; and therefore cannot aſſent with their hearts, nor have ſuch devout affections excited in their ſouls, as would recommend their prayers to the throne of grace.

Vitalian, in the year 666, was the firſt who eſtabliſhed it, commanding the Latin ſervice generally to be received into the weſtern churches; though at that time, in moſt parts, few of the people underſtood it ‡.

II. *Of their prohibiting the Uſe of the Scriptures in the vulgar Tongue, to the Laity.*

The ſcriptures are ſtrictly prohibited to be read in the vulgar tongue without licence from the biſhop ‖. The reaſon aſſigned is, that more prejudice than profit will redound from it,

* Seſſ. 22. cap. 8.
† Bellarmine de Verb. l. ii. cap. 16.
‡ Hiſtory of Popery, vol. I. p. 166.
See Tillotſon's Works, vol. I. p. 277.
Bays of the Worſhip of God in an unknown Tongue.
‖ Reg. Ind. Lib. Prohib. R. 4.

This liberty was thought too much, and therefore the faculty of granting ſuch licence was taken away by the order of Pope Clement VIII *. But when the Papiſts are charged with refuſing the ſcriptures, they take the confidence to deny it, or endeavour to put ſuch gloſſes upon it, as to make their denial of the ſcriptures to the laity a better way of ganting them; ſince they pretend to give the true ſenſe of them, and thereby to deliver them with peculiar advantage †.

In conſequence of thus withholding the uſe of the Bible or ſcriptures, from the inſpection of the people,

I. The church of Rome decrees mens private judgement of diſcretion, as utterly inſufficient to make any certain diſtinction of truth from falſehood, in matters of religion.

II. She allows no ſufficient rule, without the true church (as ſhe ſtiles herſelf) to guide and direct our private judgment of diſcretion.

III. She reſolves all certainty, as to matters of faith, into the authority of the true church.

IV. She authoriſes the true church to impoſe upon us, an abſolute neceſſity of believing ſuch things as before were not neceſſary to be believed ‡.

But that this is a novel impoſition of that church, will appear from a variety of inſtances of the Popes, and of the fathers, who have aſſerted the right of all Chriſtians to the uſe of the Bible, as Pope Gregory, St. Chryſoſtom, and St. Auſtin ‖.

If the reader deſires to know when, and upon what occaſion, this liberty was firſt taken from laymen, I will now tell him. The firſt ſynodical prohibition was that of the ſynod of Tholouſe, in the year 1228, in

* Reg. Ind. Lib. prohib. Anct. Sexti. V. & Clem. VIII. obſer. circa 4. regul.

† See the Right of the People to read the Scripture, by Dr. Stratford, ſince Biſhop of Cheſter.

‡ Eighth Note of the Church, conſidered by Dr. Scott, R. of St. Giles.

‖ Hem. 9. in Epiſt. ad Coloſ. Expoſ. Moral. &c.

theſe

theſe words: "We forbid that laymen be permitted to have the books of the Old and New Teſtament, unleſs ſome one out of devotion deſire to have the pſalter or breviary for divine offices, and the hours of the Bleſſed Virgin Mary; but even thoſe now mentioned, they may not have tranſlated in the vulgar tongue *." The ſpecial occaſion of this decree, was the preaching of the Waldenſes, who taught, that, in articles of faith, the holy ſcriptures were the rule by which men were to judge; that whatſoever was not agreeable to the word of God ought to be rejected; that the reading and knowledge of the ſcriptures was free and neceſſary to all men, both laity and clergy. But when the church of Rome had got a variety of new articles of faith as would not abide the old teſt, it was prudently done to deprive the people of the ſcriptures, that they might not be able to diſcover the errors into which they led them †. And it is highly probable, that the like motive occaſioned this privilege of reading the ſcriptures to be limited to licenſed perſons in the 22d ſeſſions of the council of Trident, and have been ſince more ſtrictly confirmed by the authority of other councils, and the decrees of Pope Clement VIII. about the year 1592. This was indeed, ſays another reverend prelate ‡, a great degree of caution, but not a jot more than ſhe ſtood in need of; for when ſhe had for a long time performed all her public offices in an unknown tongue, and robbed the laity of half the communion; when ſhe had introduced a ſtrange worſhip of relicks and images, and ſet up to herſelf many mediators for interceſſion; when ſhe had maintained, that Chriſt was offered every day in the ſacrifice of the maſs, and taught and

* D'Acherii, tom. II. p. 624.

† Dr. Stratford's Diſcourſe of the People's Right to read the Scriptures.

‡ Dr. Grove, late Biſhop of Chicheſter's Diſcourſe of the Proteſtant and Popiſh way of interpreting Scripture.

done

done many things apparently repugnant to the word of God: then, to ſecure herſelf in the poſſeſſion of theſe doctrines and practices, it was but neceſſary ſhe ſhould diveſt the common people of the ſcriptures, and claim to herſelf the ſole right of interpreting. This, and nothing but this, could ſufficiently guard her againſt all contradiction; for whatever expoſition ſhe gives of any controverted place, none muſt dare to call it in queſtion, though ſhe may have frequent occaſion to frame gloſſes directly contrary to the expreſs letter of the text. She is got into that impregnable fortreſs, and will never be forced to yield to the cleareſt evidence that can be brought, while ſhe is able to make good this unlimited power of underſtanding every thing in her own ſenſe. No wonder that the Romaniſt contends with ſo much zeal, to bear down all with the judgment of the church; and if he can gain this one point, he makes himſelf maſter of all the reſt. But Proteſtants will eaſily ſee the fallacy of ſuch pretenſions, and bear their teſtimony againſt ſuch uſurped authority.

But there is another artifice made uſe of, and practiſed for the ſake of evading this charge; which is occaſionally producing verſions of the ſcriptures into the mother tongue, or in the modern tongues; wherein they have contrived, by various falſifications, to make them ſpeak the language of their miſſals and breviaries, in order to ſanctify their novel rites by the authority of the apoſtles, and make the people believe they had been practiſed from the times even of the goſpel. Thus, to countenance the practice of canonizing, or beatifying, or making ſaints in the church, they have rendered a paſſage of St. James v. 11. not as it ought to be, Behold how we count them happy or bleſſed, but Behold how we *beatify* thoſe who have ſuffered with conſtancy: and in favour alſo of their proceſſions, where is ſaid, Heb. xi. 30. That the walls of Jericho fell down, after they had encompaſſed it about ſeven days; their verſion renders it, After a *proceſſion*

ceſſion of ſeven days around it: and, to give the better colour to their trade of pilgrimages, St. Paul, according to their verſion, requires it as the qualification of a good widow, that ſhe have lodged *pilgrims*, 1 Tim. v. 10.; and St. John praiſes Gaius for having dealt faithfully with pilgrims, John iii. 5, &c. See a treatiſe, intitled *Popery an Enemy to Scripture*, where the learned and ingenious author, Mr. Serces, has given a large collection of theſe falſifications.

Of Indulgences.

Indulgences are the ſureſt touchſtones which his holineſs makes uſe of to try the faith of true believers. A vaſt number of devotees imagine that they infallibly ſecure the attainment of paradiſe. The origin of theſe means, this ſalutary inſtitution, which has ſince degenerated into an abuſe, ſeems particularly hinted at in a paſſage of St. Cyprian: but be that as it will, the releaſe from torments was not known till a long time after by the name of indulgence. It was common enough indeed in the ſeventh and eighth centuries. Pope Sergius, in the 884, gave three forty days indulgences at once to ſuch as ſhould viſit the church of St. Martin on the Hills, on the feſtival peculiarly devoted to the ſervice of that ſaint.

If the term *Indulgence* be defined, we mean a remiſſion from temporal pains, which are due to actual ſins. It will be comprehended with eaſe, that acceſs to heaven is not therefore the freer to ſuch devotees as have obtained it, unleſs by acts of virtue they concur to make it effectual; and yet every one is conſcious of the exceſſive power aſcribed to indulgences, and of the vaſt ſervices they have done to avarice, miſguided zeal, and ambition. No one however ought to imagine, that our intent is to overthrow the real advantages of them by this expreſſion; for we are no ſtrangers to the miracles wrought by St. Bernard, who,

whilſt

whilſt he was preaching up the indulgences of Pope Eugenius III. inflamed the hearts of the believers of his age at once with a ſpirit of war and contrition, and ſhewed the atonement of their crimes, and the remiſſion of their torments, annexed to thoſe croſſes and ſwords wherewith he perſuaded them to arm themſelves againſt the infidels. We are very ſenſible likewiſe, that St. Bridget declares, in her revelations, the viſion ſhe had of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who informed her, "That the moſt infallible way to atone for all ſins, was to procure indulgences; that with reſpect to himſelf, whenever he was inclined to treat any ſoul with tenderneſs and affection, he would adviſe it to reſide conſtantly at Rome, there being no place in the world where ſo many indulgences could be procured." To this we might add, that there is no city more commodious than this for devotees, who would turn their piety towards this object. The Baſilicas have indulgences for every day in the year, and on feſtivals they are redoubled.

Of Indulgences for the Dead, &c.

When the queſtion is aſked in the *Catholic Chriſtian*,

Q. What is the meaning of *indulgences* for the dead?

A. They are not granted by way of abſolution, ſince the paſtors of the church have not that juriſdiction over the dead; but they are only available to the faithful departed, by way of *ſuffrage*, or ſpiritual ſuccour, applied to their ſouls out of the treaſure of the church.

Q. What is the meaning of a *jubilee?*

A. A *jubilee*, ſo called from the reſemblance it bears with the *jubilee year* in the old law, Lev. xxv. & xxvii. (which was a year of remiſſion, in which bondſmen were reſtored to liberty, aad every one returned to his poſſeſſions) is a *plenary indulgence* granted every twenty-fifth year, as alſo upon other extraordinary occaſions,

ſions, to ſuch as, being truly penitent, ſhall worthily receive the bleſſed ſacrament, and perform the other conditions of faſting, alms, and prayer, uſually preſcribed at ſuch times.

Q. What then is the difference between a *jubilee* and any other *plenary indulgence?*

A. A *jubilee* is more ſolemn, and accompanied with certain privileges, not uſually granted upon any other occaſions, with regard to the being abſolved by any approved confeſſor from all excommunications, and other reſerved caſes, and having vows exchanged into the performance of other works of piety. To which we may add, that as a *jubilee* is extended to the whole church, which at that time joins as it were in a body, in offering a holy violence to heaven by prayer and penitential works; and as the cauſe for granting an indulgence at ſuch times is uſually more evident, and more or greater works of piety are preſcribed for the obtaining it, the indulgence of conſequence is likely to be much more certain and ſecure.

Of Oaths of Allegiance to Foreign Princes.

If we conſider the ſupremacy of the Pope, and infallibility of the church of Rome, in a political point of view, viz. as prohibiting the members of it from taking oaths of allegiance to any Proteſtant prince where they reſide, or breaking of them, the genuine nature of this religion will more evidently appear.

Pope Urban decreed, that it ſhould be lawful for ſubjects to break their oaths of allegiance with all ſuch princes as were not in communion with the Pope *.

The Pope claims a right to abſolve men from their oaths, and they have frequently done it. The council of Conſtance has given us a remarkable inſtance of abſolution from oaths, in the caſe of Frederic Duke of Auſtria; where they ſay, notwithſtanding any oaths

* Hiſtory of Popery, vol. I. part iii. p. 342.

actually

actually taken to the contrary, from which we abſolve them, that they, and every one of them, ſhall effectually obey, &c. * If now this council did aſſume to itſelf a power to abſolve from oaths, it is mere trifling to ſay that the church of Rome cannot licenſe men to perjure or forſwear themſelves, ſince the practice is allowed to abſolve men from their oaths, and the Pope has declared that truth is not to be kept with heretics.

Pope Martin V. writing to Alexander Duke of Lithuania, ſays, "Know ye, that you could not pledge your faith to heretics; and if you keep your faith with them, you would ſin MORTALLY †.

And whilſt princes are prohibited pledging or keeping faith with heretics, no doubt ſubjects may be abſolved from their oaths to their princes by plenitude of the papal power: by the ſame plenitude they may be diſpenſed with to lie, and ſwear falſely. What ſecurity is there that this may not be the caſe? for it is equally eaſy to grant a diſpenſation to ſin for the future, and to abſolve for ſin that is paſt; and the ſame power that can do the one can do the other: now that the Pope has done the one, is not diſputed; therefore he may or can do the other ‡.

This has given occaſion to a late judicious enquiry, how far Papiſts ought to be treated as good ſubjects? Of which I preſume my readers will approve the following abſtract.

I. It is true, "*that all and every good ſubject has a right to protection*, let their religious tenets be what they will, unleſs they are inconſiſtent with the intereſts of civil ſociety; and therefore it is apprehended, that the laws of this land are not againſt the believers of *tran-*

* Council of Conſtance, ſeſſ. 35.

† See more Inſtances in Dr. Whitby's Diſcourſe concerning Laws, eccleſiaſtical and civil, againſt Heretics.

‡ Dr. Sykes's Remarks on the Vindication of the Roman Catholics, p. 34.

ſubſtantiation

ſubſtantiation as ſuch, nor againſt the believers of *image-worſhip* as ſuch, nor againſt the believers of ſuch like notions as ſuch; which if a man can bring himſelf to believe, and will let others be at liberty not to believe, let him, in God's name, enjoy his notions: but wen I ſay this, I cannot but obſerve, that the Papiſts never have at any time, in any country where they could prevent it, given or profeſſed to give a toleration to ſuch as diſſented from their notions: they never have permitted any man any where to profeſs opinions contrary to the ſentiments which they profeſs. They have always declared ſuch to be heretics, and they have never failed to perſecute ſuch when they have had it in their power. Their profeſſed tenets are, that ſuch men are every where to be expelled as ſcabbed ſheep *, which infect the whole flock of Chriſt, and therefore are not to have the comforts of humanity with the faithful of Chriſt. They have therefore no right to a toleration where they are undermoſt, who never at any time, or in any place where they could prevent it, have granted or profeſſed to grant a toleration to others who have differed from them; for which reaſon they ſhould not, of all people, complain, if they do not enjoy what they never yet did grant; they have no right to complain of hardſhip, injuſtice, perſecution, or whatever name they will give it, if they do not obtain from our legiſlature what other diſſenters from the church of England enjoy, a toleration and freedom from penal laws; for thoſe who never grant, or profeſs to grant ſuch privileges, have no right to complain if they are deprived of them.

II. If the Roman Catholic tenets be not againſt the laws of civil ſociety here in Great Britain, why do not the Papiſts give the common teſts of their allegiance, that all other good ſubjects do? Tender them to any ſectary of any denomination of Proteſtant Diſſenters, Preſbyterians, Baptiſts, Independents, any but Papiſts and profeſſed Jacobites, and they readily take

* Enquiry, p. 5. who quotes the Words of Pope Martin.

them,

actually taken to the contrary, from which we absolve them, that they, and every one of them, shall effectually obey, &c. * If now this council did assume to itself a power to absolve from oaths, it is mere trifling to say that the church of Rome cannot license men to perjure or forswear themselves, since the practice is allowed to absolve men from their oaths, and the Pope has declared that truth is not to be kept with heretics.

Pope Martin V. writing to Alexander Duke of Lithuania, says, "Know ye, that you could not pledge your faith to heretics; and if you keep your faith with them, you would sin MORTALLY †.

And whilst princes are prohibited pledging or keeping faith with heretics, no doubt subjects may be absolved from their oaths to their princes by plenitude of the papal power: by the same plenitude they may be dispensed with to lie, and swear falsely. What security is there that this may not be the case? for it is equally easy to grant a dispensation to sin for the future, and to absolve for sin that is past; and the same power that can do the one can do the other: now that the Pope has done the one, is not disputed; therefore he may or can do the other ‡.

This has given occasion to a late judicious enquiry, how far Papists ought to be treated as good subjects? Of which I presume my readers will approve the following abstract.

I. It is true, "*that all and every good subject has a right to protection*, let their religious tenets be what they will, unless they are inconsistent with the interests of civil society; and therefore it is apprehended, that the laws of this land are not against the believers of *tran-*

* Council of Constance, sess. 35.

† See more Instances in Dr. Whitby's Discourse concerning Laws, ecclesiastical and civil, against Heretics.

‡ Dr. Sykes's Remarks on the Vindication of the Roman Catholics, p. 34.

substantiation

ſubſtantiation as ſuch, nor againſt the believers of *image-worſhip* as ſuch, nor againſt the believers of ſuch like notions as ſuch; which if a man can bring himſelf to believe, and will let others be at liberty not to believe, let him, in God's name, enjoy his notions: but wen I ſay this, I cannot but obſerve, that the Papiſts never have at any time, in any country where they could prevent it, given or profeſſed to give a toleration to ſuch as diſſented from their notions: they never have permitted any man any where to profeſs opinions contrary to the ſentiments which they profeſs. They have always declared ſuch to be heretics, and they have never failed to perſecute ſuch when they have had it in their power. Their profeſſed tenets are, that ſuch men are every where to be expelled as ſcabbed ſheep *, which infect the whole flock of Chriſt, and therefore are not to have the comforts of humanity with the faithful of Chriſt. They have therefore no right to a toleration where they are undermoſt, who never at any time, or in any place where they could prevent it, have granted or profeſſed to grant a toleration to others who have differed from them; for which reaſon they ſhould not, of all people, complain, if they do not enjoy what they never yet did grant; they have no right to complain of hardſhip, injuſtice, perſecution, or whatever name they will give it, if they do not obtain from our legiſlature what other diſſenters from the church of England enjoy, a toleration and freedom from penal laws; for thoſe who never grant, or profeſs to grant ſuch privileges, have no right to complain if they are deprived of them.

II. If the Roman Catholic tenets be not againſt the laws of civil ſociety here in Great Britain, why do not the Papiſts give the common teſts of their allegiance, that all other good ſubjects do? Tender them to any ſectary of any denomination of Proteſtant Diſſenters, Preſbyterians, Baptiſts, Independents, any but Papiſts and profeſſed Jacobites, and they readily take

* Enquiry, p. 5. who quotes the Words of Pope Martin.

them,

them, and in consequence enjoy the liberty they have a right to: whereas, if the Papists be called upon to take the oaths, they all instantly refuse; summon them to appear, give them notice of time and place, in times of common danger to the public, call upon them to give security for their good behaviour,—not one, where there are four or five hundred, will appear. Now, surely the protection of a government is not due to any, but such as are ready to give the ordinary tests of their allegiance to that government.

III. It is well known to all Protestants, that Pope Paul V. has absolutely forbid all Papists, or, if the term be more agreeable, all Roman Catholics, to take the oath of allegiance. He insists they cannot take it *salva fide Catholica, & salute animarum vestrarum*, consistent with the Catholic faith, and the salvation of their souls. Should I add the authority of a cardinal, I mean Bellarmine, to the authority of the Pope, it may be thought I add a notion only of a particular divine. Why now should any one employ his endeavours to have the Roman Catholics enjoy the protection of good subjects, when they will not, they *cannot*, they *dare not*, give the ordinary test of *allegiance* to the government?

IV. The oath of allegiance is only an acknowledgement of the King to be rightful and lawful King of this kingdom, and that the Pope has no power or authority to depose him; and that the person who takes such oath will continue to bear faith and true allegiance to him, notwithstanding any declaration of excommunication made or granted by the Pope. Now, if the Pope expressly forbids all Papists to take this oath, and declares his brief to be drawn by his *special direction* *; and orders that they "should not go to the churches of heretics, nor hear their sermons, nor communicate in their rites, lest they should incur the anger

* Vide Pope Paul V.'s Brief, apud Collier's Church-History, vol. II. Records, p. 105.

of

of God; and that they cannot, without the moſt evident and grievous injury of the honour of God, take the oath" of allegiance; and accordingly all do refuſe to take it. What right then have Roman Catholics to protection under this government * ?

Now the Papiſts have gone on ever ſince in this refuſal to take the oath of allegiance, and for that reaſon they ought to be treated as enemies to the government.

V. Protection and allegiance, in all ſtates, in all governments, are reciprocal. The reaſon of men's entering into ſociety is, by uniting ſtrength, to ſecure themſelves, ſince otherwiſe they might be too weak to reſiſt the attacks of thoſe that might invade them: every particular private man therefore is protected by the ſtrength of the whole, and every one that claims the advantage of this ſecurity, is under obligation to join with the ſociety againſt its enemies. Hence it is, that all governors have a right to demand teſts of allegiance from the people; and all thoſe who refuſe to give them, when called upon, in effect, declare themſelves enemies of that ſociety. When therefore Papiſts refuſe the teſt of allegiance, they have a right to be refuſed protection. Nor have they any reaſon to complain of injuſtice, hardſhip, oppreſſion, or by whatever name they may call the execution of the laws of this land; ſince an enemy of any ſociety is by the law of ſelf-preſervation to be guarded againſt, and enemies are not to be treated as friends.

VI. Imagine that the legiſlative power in any ſociety has fixed the perſon who ſhall govern them on the throne; now, if the community conſents to, and approves of, and readily gives the teſt of their obedi-

* See the caſe of Archpreſbyter Blackwell, who was here in England in King James I.'s time, who was committed to priſon, and obtained his liberty by taking the oath of allegiance; and the conſequence was, that he was removed from his office for taking of it, and one Birchett put in his place.

Collier's Church-Hiſtory.

ence and ſubmiſſion to the perſon fixed by the legiſlature, and any ſect, or the men of any profeſſion, who refuſe to take the uſual oath for the proof of their allegiance, is it not natural for the government under which they live, to have a jealous eye over them, to guard againſt the increaſe of their ſtrength, to obſerve whether they tamper with the people to corrupt them, to enquire who they are that endeavour to make converts to ſuch an oppoſition, and to inflict ſome puniſhment on ſuch as miſbehave themſelves in ſuch manner? Now, if any convert to Popery is made an enemy by principle to our government, the government is thereby in proportion ſo much weakened.

When therefore our editor tells us, "unanimity can never be expected, unleſs all the *ſubjects* are equally protected,"—he ſhould have ſaid,—"unleſs *friends* and enemies are equally protected,"—and then he had ſpoke what he wanted to be done. But are ſuch as refuſe the common teſts of friendſhip, to be equally protected with thoſe that are friends?—The word *ſubject*, indeed, is a good term, that comprehends all who live under any government, be they what they will, friends or not friends; and if they behave themſelves as good ſubjects, ſhould have a right to protection. But while they acknowledge a ſupremacy in a foreign perſon, and an abſolute ſubmiſſion to him, and own a dependance ſo much upon his power, as not to think it lawful to ſubmit to our laws, but ſo far only as that foreign power permits, who, as their governor, pronounce it unlawful to take the oath of allegiance to our King; they cannot juſtly be looked upon as a ſect that ought to be indulged as good friends and good ſubjects; but as profeſſed ſubjects of a foreign power, and an enemy to that ſtate under which they have long enjoyed peace and quiet *.

* See an Enquiry how far Papiſts ought to be treated here as good ſubjects, printed in 1746.

Of

Of Persecution *by the* Church *of* Rome.

As ſeveral of the doctrines of the church of Rome are unſcriptural and abſurd, it is no wonder if ſhe could find no other way to ſupport even the outward profeſſion of them but by force and violence; from hence are derived thoſe peremptory decrees in behalf of perſecution, which were enacted by the fourth Lateran council, held under Pope Innocent III. in the year 1215 *. and of that of Conſtance, that ſat from 1414 to 1418.—And in the fifth council of Toledo, can. 3. theſe holy fathers ſay, "We the holy council promulge this ſentence or decree, pleaſing to God, that whoſoever hereafter ſhall ſucceed to the kingdom, ſhall not aſcend the throne, till he has ſworn to permit no man to live in his kingdom who is not a Catholic; and if any afterwards violate this promiſe, let him be anathema marantha, in the preſence of the eternal God, and become fuel of the eternal fire †."

Hence it is, that Paul IV. in his dying words to the cardinals about him, recommended to them the tribunal of the inquiſition, as *the beſt prop and main bulwark of Roman faith.* That was ſpeaking like a Pope indeed, but not like a true vicar of Jeſus Chriſt. Hence it was, that in the following ages that church proceeded with the utmoſt rigour againſt all thoſe who preſumed to diſſent from her.

Let impartial hiſtory recount, if ſhe can recount, the numbers of God's creatures that have been murdered in God's name by that church ‡.

Let hiſtory tell of the carnage committed in the many holy wars.—The holy wars!—undertaken for the extirpation of infidels ‖.

* Popery always the ſame, Introduction, p. 1.
† Groſvenor's Sermons at Salter's Hall, p. 12.
‡ Fordyce on the Deluſive and Bloody Spirit of Popery, p. 589.
‖ Buſching's Hiſtory of France, vol. II. p. 339.
Britiſh Memorial, p. 15.

In Bohemia, from the year 1523 to 1632, by oppreſſive fines, ſevere diſcipline, and cruel deaths *.

The cruelties at Thorn in Poland, by beheading, hanging, ſevere whipping, &c. in order to ſuppreſs all the Proteſtant churches and ſchools, which the primate of Poland calls the ſacred execution at Thorn, againſt the profaners of holy things, and which, he ſays, ought never to be forgotten †.

The poor Saltzburgers were but lately before our eyes ſtripped of all they had in the world, and drawn from their habitations by a bigotted prieſt and prince, who as a biſhop had ſworn it, and as a popiſh prince was obliged to it; their leaders ſeized, and thrown into dungeons; others executed with the utmoſt rigour; huſbands torn from their wives, and parents from their children. A caſe ſo deplorable their treatment, ſo inhuman, that even another Popiſh prince, the Emperor of Germany, interpoſed to put a ſtop to it, as it was purely for conſcience ſake ‡.

The Vaudois, partly ſubject to France, and partly to the Duke of Savoy, felt the ſad effects of Popiſh cruelties in 1646 to 1655, when the French King excited, by various methods, the Duke of Savoy to perſecute them with the utmoſt ſeverity, ſo that in Piedmont, in the ſpace of ten years, more than 40,000 were put to death, or driven to Germany, Holland, and England ‖. Read the hiſtory of the perſecution of the German Proteſtants, as well as thoſe in the Low Countries, how they were oppreſſed and harraſſed under innumerable

* Hiſtory of Bohemia Perſecution, printed 1650, p. 269 & ſeq.

† Primate's Letter to the Palatinates of Poland. Political State, Aug. 1733.

‡ See a Serious Call to the City of London, containing many Accounts taken from the High Dutch, in 1732.

‖ See the Hiſtory of the Maſſacre at Piedmont, by Sir Samuel Moreland.

ſeverities

ſeverities by the Popes, &c. from 1521 to 1623 §, and from thence to 1663 *.

In France, in 1685, when Lewis XIV. repealed the edict of Nantz (made by his predeceſſor Henry IV. for allowing the Proteſtants the free exerciſe of their religion in 1598) which he declared ſhould be irrevocable; and though the preſent Lewis XIV. owned, that he owed his crown to his Proteſtant ſubjects; yet ungratefully he forced 150,000 of them out of his kingdom, dragooned others into Popery, ſent others, who refuſed to comply, for ſlaves, chained them in his gallies, forced their children from them to be educated in monaſteries, and ſhut up others to perpetual impriſonment. The Proteſtants at Dauphiny in France were ſeverely perſecuted in 1744, purſuant to ſeveral edicts publiſhed by the French King for the ſuppreſſion of Proteſtants † in Languedoc; and the diſtricts of Montauban at Puy-Laurens, Caſtres, Sainte Foi, Niſmis, on account of their religious aſſemblies, were fined, impriſoned, and put to death in the years 1745, 1746, and 1747. More violent proceedings againſt the Proteſtants of Vivarais about the ſame time ‡; and even ſo lately as 1762, the reverend Mr. Rochette was executed at Thouloufe, for profeſſing the Proteſtant religion, and permitting others to join with him in his own houſe to worſhip God according to their conſciences ‖. Nor was this a ſingular inſtance, but well accords with the articles or edicts now in force, publiſhed by the King of France §.

Let all civil and eccleſiaſtical hiſtories relate the cruel proceedings againſt the Proteſtants in Hungary, in the beginning of the ſeventeenth century.

§ Brand's Hiſt. of the Reformation, in 3 vol. fol. for that period.

* Beza's Hiſtory from 1621 to 1663.

† Great Britain's Memorial, p. 17.

‡ Popery always the ſame, p. 43.

‖ Letter from France, publiſhed in the Royal Magazine for May 1762.

§ Popery always the ſame. The French King's Edict and Articles, from p. 78 to 100.

Let this Holy Mother Church relate the maſſacre of Paris, on St. Bartholomew's day, 1572, in which about 30,000 Proteſtants were murdered in cold blood, according to Thuanus; ſome authors affirms above 100,000, among whom were 5 or 600 noblemen and gentlemen of diſtinction. Thuanus himſelf calls it a moſt deteſtable villainy, and in abhorrence of St. Bartholomew's day. Such a complication of helliſh cruelty, who could have thought it! found panegyriſts by the abetters of Popery. *Peter Charpentier* wrote an apology for it; *John Des Caurres* extolled it in an ode, and the moſt luxuriant encomiums were beſtowed upon it in a ſpeech pronounced before Philip II. The holy father himſelf, Gregory XIII. was no ſooner informed by cardinal de Lorraine, than he went in proceſſion to St. Lewis's church, where he returned the merciful Maker and Redeemer of mankind public and ſolemn thanks for that bloody work. Nay, that horrible tranſaction was repreſented at Rome in a magnificent picture, with this inſcription, *The triumph of the church*; which, indeed, as our author obſerves, was very proper, if it meant the triumph of the church of Rome over chriſtianity and humanity itſelf *.

Let hiſtory relate too the maſſacre of Ireland in the reign of Charles I. in which about 100,000 Proteſtants were barbarouſly murdered in the ſpace of two months, chiefly by Popiſh prieſts.

When the Popiſh emiſſaries were ripe for executing their barbarities in Ireland, their proceedings againſt the Engliſh were various. Some of the Iriſh were content to ſtrip, plunder, and to expel them; then they were ſpirited up by their prieſt to ſhake off all humanity, and to murder men, women and children, which ended in this final reſolution, entirely to root out the very name of a Proteſtant in Ireland. The many methods of cruelty are too ſhocking to tender minds

* See Bayle's Dictionary, Article Charpentier, and Article Caurres, or Popery always the ſame, p. 60.

to

to relate. The particulars may be ſeen in a ſmall piece, intitled *Popery and Slavery diſplayed*, p. 19, 20.

Yet as notorious as was this ſcene of barbarity, it was induſtriouſly promoted by the prieſts, who adminiſtered the ſacrament to many, on condition they would ſpare none; and this was backed by the benediction and indulgence of the Pope, of which the following is a true copy.

The POPE's BULL. *Ad futuram Rei Memoriam.*

URBANUS OCTAVUS, *&c.*

"Having taken into our ſerious conſideration the great zeal of the *Iriſh*, towards the propagating of the Catholic faith, and the piety of the Catholic warriors in the ſeveral armies of that kingdom (which was for that ſingular fervency in the true worſhip of God, and notable care had formerly in the like caſe by the the inhabitants thereof, for the maintenance and preſervation of the ſame orthodox faith, called of old the *Land of Saints*) and having got certain notice, how, in imitation of their godly and worthy anceſtors, they endeavour, by force of arms, to deliver their thralled nation from the oppreſſions and grievous injuries of the *hereticks*, wherewith this long time it hath been afflicted and heavily burthened; and gallantly do in them what lieth to *extirpate* and *totally root out thoſe workers of iniquity*, who in the kingdom of *Ireland* had infected, and always ſtriving to infect, the maſs of *Catholic* purity with the peſtiferous leaven of their *heretical* contagion: We therefore, being willing to cheriſh them with the gift of thoſe ſpiritual graces, whereof by God we are ordained the only diſpoſers on earth, by the mercy of the ſame Almighty God, truſting in the authority of the bleſſed apoſtles *Peter* and *Paul*, and by virtue of that power of binding and looſing of ſouls, which God was pleaſed (without our deſerving) to confer upon us: To all and every one of the faithful Chriſtians in the

aforesaid kingdom of *Ireland*, now, and for the time of militating or fighting against the *heretics*, and others enemies of the *Catholic* faith, they being truly and sincerely penitent, after confession, and the spiritual refreshing of themselves with the sacred communion of the body and blood of Christ, do grant a full and *plenary indulgence*, and *absolute remission for all their sins*, and such as in the holy time of jubilee is usual to be granted to those that devoutly visit a certain number of privileged churches, within and without the walls of our city of Rome; by the tenour of which present letters, for once only, and no more, we freely bestow the favour of this absolution upon all and every one of them; and withal desiring heartily all the faithful in Christ, now in arms as aforesaid, to be partakers of this most precious treasure.

"To all and every one of these aforesaid faithful Christians, we grant licence, and give power to choose into themselves, for this effect, any fit confessor, whether a secular priest, or a regular of some order, and likewise any other selected person approved of by the ordinary of the place, who, after a diligent hearing of their confessions, shall have power to liberate and absolve them from excommunication, suspension, and all other ecclesiastical sentences and censures, for whomsoever, or for what cause soever, pronounced or inflicted upon them; as also from all sins, trespasses, transgressions, crimes, and delinquencies, how heinous and atrocious soever they be; not omitting those very enormities in the most peculiar cases, which by any whatsoever former constitutions of ours, or of our predecessors Popes, (than which we will have these to be no less valued in every point) were designed to be reserved to the ordinary, or to the apostolic see; from all which the confessor shall hereby have power granted him to absolve the foresaid *Catholics* at the bar of conscience, and in that sense only. And furthermore, we give them power to exchange what vow or vows soever they were formerly

formerly aſtricted to (thoſe of religion and chaſtity excepted) into any other pious or good work or works, impoſed or to be impoſed on them, and every one of them to perform in all the foreſaid caſes, by a wholeſome penance, according to the mind and will of the confeſſor.

" Therefore, by the tenor of theſe preſent letters, and by the virtue of that *holy ſtrict obedience*, wherein *all Chriſtians are bound unto us*, we charge and command all and every one of the reverend brethren, archbiſhops, biſhops, and other eccleſiaſtical prelates, and whatſoever ordinaries of places now reſiding in *Ireland*, together with all vicars, ſubſtitutes and officials under them; or theſe failing, we command all ſuch to whom in thoſe places the care of ſouls is incumbent, that as ſoon as they ſhall have received copies of theſe our letters, they ſhall forthwith, without any ſtop or delay, publiſh them, and cauſe them to be publiſhed, throughout all their churches, dioceſes, provinces, countries, cities, towns, lands, villages, and places whatſoever. *&c. &c. &c.*

" Now, that theſe principal letters of ours, which cannot be conveniently brought to every place, may the ſooner come to the notice of all, our will and pleaſure is, that any whatſoever copies or tranſumpts, whether written or printed, that are ſubſcribed with the hand of a public notary, and which have the ſeal of ſome eminent perſon in eccleſiaſtical dignity affixed thereunto, be of the ſame force, power, and authority, and have the like credit in every reſpect given unto them, as would be to theſe our principal letters, if they were ſhewn and exhibited.

" Dated at *Rome* in the *Vatican*, or St. *Peter*'s palace, the 25th of *May* 1643, and in the twentieth year of our pontificate.

M. A. Maraldus."

Let

Let history impartially relate the slaughter of about forty thousand of poor Americans *, on pretence of their resisting the attempts made for their conversion, as well as on accounts purely political.

And let that infernal slaughter-house, the inquisition, be described in its proper colours, where all the cruelties that imagination can invent; or the malignity of demons can inflict, to insult and torture, and, if possible, to damn the miserable victim, are practised in terrible perfection. Spain can boast of many of these *holy* inquisitions, as they are pleased to call them, as at Madrid, at Seville, Toledo, Grenada, Lordova, Cuenca, Valladolid, Mincia, Lerida, Logrono, St. Jago, Saragossa, Valencia, Barcelona, and Majorca; as also without the kingdom, as in the Canary islands, Mexico, Carthagena and Lima †.

In Portugal and Italy the inquisition is in full force, and ordained merely for the extirpation of heresy, *i. e.* every thing contrary to the doctrine and practices of the church of Rome, in which they make use of the most dreadful and bloody tortures, to force persons to confess, and burn them without regard to age, sex, or condition. Once a year, or oftener, they celebrate what they call an *Auto de Fe*, or act of faith; and when the sentence of the holy tribunal of the inquisition is to be executed, it is generally on some festival, in the view of the court, and with the acclamations of the people ‡. Nay, so infatuated are they to Popish cruelty, that even the King of Portugal, on his recovery from sickness, a little before the late earthquake, caused an act of

* Bishop of Chiapas's Account of the Voyages and Cruelties of the Spaniards in America, printed at London, 1699, Oct.

† Busching's Geography, vol. II. pag. 250.

‡ See Limborch's History of the Inquisition, translated, by Dr. Chandler, with his History of Persecution prefixed.

British Memorial, and Grosvenor's Serm. at Salt. Hall.

faith

faith to be celebrated, when three Jews, and one relapſe Proteſtant, were burnt, as a public thankſgiving to God for his reovery.

Dr. Geddes tells us, that infinitely more Chriſtian blood have been ſhed by the Papal empire and its agents, for not complying with the idolatry of its worſhip, than ever was ſhed by the Roman heathens *.

Does it appear from hence that Popery is mended in theſe reſpects, or is it eaſy to conceive how it ever ſhould? Can theſe principles be diſowned, which are declared to be the dictates of the Holy Ghoſt, decrees and canons framed by infallible councils, the performance of which is therein declared to be well-pleaſing to God, and in themſelves meritorious?

A conciſe account of the inquiſition I have occaſionally given in the hiſtory of the Reformation in the Low Countries, A. D. 1550, and need not repeat it here; but I ſhall add the concluding paragraph of Limborch's Hiſtory of the inquiſition, tranſlated by Dr. Chandler, and with it I ſhall cloſe this part.

The Papiſts, ſays Profeſſor Limborch †, glory that the inquiſition is the moſt certain remedy to extirpate hereſies; eſpecially, *Ludovicus à Paramo* ‡, takes a great deal of pains to ſhow that hereſies have, in ſeveral places, been extinguiſhed by the help of the inquiſition, and at laſt concludes in theſe words: "Theſe are ſome of the faireſt fruits, which the moſt fertile field of the holy office hath produced to the church in all kingdoms, where it hath not been obſtructed. But amongſt all provinces and countries, the kingdoms of Spain do every day receive the nobleſt fruits; for as in theſe countries the holy office of the inquiſition is maintained with greater ſeverity, and is in greater honour and eſteem with the nobles and princes, ſo

* Geddes, vol. III. Eſſay VI.
† Limborch's Hiſt. of the Inquiſition, p. 318.
‡ Lib. II. 3. 4, 5.

it

it flouriſhes in greater authority and power, whereby the judges of the earth carry on more diligent inquiſition againſt hereſies, and more effectually pull them up by the very roots." And becauſe the inquiſition is ſo effectual a method to extirpate hereſies, he gathers from thence, that it was ordained for this purpoſe by the moſt wiſe providence of God. But what is really unjuſt in itſelf, and carried on by unjuſt methods, cannot have God for its author. Nor is ſucceſs any argument that the inquiſition is from God; the firſt inquiry is, whether it be ſuitable to the nature of the Chriſtian doctrine? If it be not, 'tis then unjuſt and antichriſtian; many things are unrighteouſly undertaken by men, and accompliſhed by violence and cruelty, by which innocence is oppreſſed, which although God, in his juſt and wiſe counſel permits, he is far from approving. Even in Japan, a cruel perſecution hath extinguiſhed the Chriſtian religion, as preached by the Roman prieſts, ſo that the Roman Catholic religion is equally extinguiſhed there, by the violence of perſecution, as theſe doctrines are in Spain, which are contrary to the church of Rome, and which they render odious by the infamous name of hereſy; and yet they will not allow that any juſt argument can be drawn from hence to prove, that that perſecution was directed by the Divine Providence, as a moſt effectual remedy for the extirpation of their religion. If other parties of Chriſtians would uſe the ſame diligence and cruelty of inquiſition againſt them, I may venture to affirm, that they themſelves could not withſtand it; but that, within a few years, the Popiſh religion would be extinguiſhed in all Proteſtant countries, and ſcarce a ſingle perſon left who would dare to profeſs it. But God forbid that the Chriſtian religion ſhould ever be propagated this way, which does not conſiſt in a feigned and hypocritical profeſſion, but in a ſincere and undiſſembled faith. And therefore, as no one ought to aſſume to himſelf the

the power of judging concerning it but God, the ſearcher of hearts, to him only let us leave it to paſs the true judgment concerning every man's belief. Let us in the mean while deteſt the tyranny of the Papiſts, and ſtrive to reduce thoſe who in our judgment hold errors in the way of truth, by the good offices of charity and benevolence, without arrogating to ourſelves a judgment over the conſciences of others. And, out of a ſerious regard to the laſt great day of judgment, let us approve our conſciences to God, and every one of us, expecting from his mercy an equitable and righteous judgment, pray without ceaſing, ARISE, O LORD, AND JUDGE THY CAUSE.

Of CROISADES.

This device is ſaid to be firſt hatched by that ſuperſtitious hermit named Peter of Picardy.

Pope Urban very opportunely made uſe of for his advantage, and under the pretence of ſympathiſing with the unhappy Chriſtians at Jeruſalem, raiſed an army to favour the purpoſes of dominion and authority, and, in a long harangue in a general council of the weſt, at Cleremont, in the year 1095, he concluded his oration in the following words: "We therefore releaſe all faithful Chriſtians that ſhall bear arms againſt heretics and infidels of great and wonderful penance for their ſins, and receive them under the defence of the church, and the protection of St. Peter and St. Paul.

Beſides the particular deſigns of Urban in this expedition, it frequently was made to ſerve other purpoſes, as their ambition or their reſentment inclined them, as we find they were afterwards againſt the Albigenſes or Waldenſes.

Here it may be very proper to ſpeak a little of the perſecutions carried on againſt the Albigenſes or Waldenſes, their principles being the ſame, the former name

name being given them from their inhabiting the town Albigium; the latter as having embraced the principles in general of *Peter Waldo*; and this is amply confirmed by the Popes proceſſes, and ſentence againſt them, it being always in the name of Waldenſes.

The firſt perſecution was raiſed againſt them by Pope Innocent III. about the year 1198, who pretended at firſt to reduce them by reaſon and argument, and for that purpoſe ſent two men amongſt them, who found them ſo well eſtabliſhed in their principles, that they offered a free and public diſputation. In the mean time Pope Innocent ſtrengthened himſelf, and prepared to deſtroy or conquer them. Upon this footing the Pope likewiſe ſent out his ſpiritual thunder-bolts, or anathemas, and in the ſame or following year erected the inquiſition; an office peculiarly intended for the finding out and puniſhing ſuch as they pleaſed to call heretics, in which monks were principally employed, and chiefly they of the order of St. Dominic, inſtituted by the Pope; and by theſe means, together with the invitations and promiſes given by the Popes bulls of full pardon of ſin and paradiſe to all that would come and bear arms againſt them for forty days; ſo that the army increaſed to near 100,000 *; and hiſtory mentions their deſtroying in the ſpace of ſix months, or thereabout, 200,000 †. He likewiſe excommunicated and declared war againſt Raymond Earl of Thouloufe, and his ſubjects, for not joining in the perſecution of the Albigenſes.

Of the Worship *of the* Church *of* Rome.

This may be conſidered in regard to the objects of it, the ſtated daily ſervice, and alſo as varied at particular times in the ſolemnities or ceremonies of it, and as performed by the Pope, Cardinal, or Prieſts. But

* Bennet's Perſecution and Cruelty of the Ch. of Rome.

† Dr. Groſvenor's Sermons againſt Popery.

as

as a particular relation of all these would exceed the limits of this work, I shall only give an account of some of their solemnities and ceremonies that are most remarkable, referring the reader, for the form and method of the common and ordinary service, to the Romish missal or breviary, &c.

Of the ALTAR.

The ALTAR, according to the sacred canons, should be made of stone, and it is the bishop's province to consecrate it; the table to be of one single stone, supported by pillars; there should be three steps to go up to it, covered with a carpet, and it is the clerk's business to take care that the table be covered with a *chrismal*, that is, a fine cloth, as white as possible, be laid upon it. All this must be observed with the greatest exactness with respect to the high altar, where Christ's body is for the generality deposited. The clerks must be dressed in their surplices when they approach it, and immediately kneel down and adore the holy sacrament. Certain rules are likewise to be observed in the change of the ornaments: the whole must be blessed, crossed, &c. sprinkled with holy water. The same formalities are to be observed with respect to the tabernacle of the altar, to the *pyx*, the box where the host is locked up, and the corporals on which they consecrate; in all which they are to provide every thing of the greatest value; neither gold, silver, or precious stones, are spared to adorn it; and the most splendid productions of art contribute to its lustre. Tapers are set on the right and left side, which must be made of white wax, except in offices for the dead, &c.

There must be a crucifix in relievo on the altar of curious workmanship, and the crucifix must be so placed as that the foot may be as high as the top of the candlesticks. We shall pass by the cruets, basons, &c. for *washing*, &c. There is also the little bell, which is to be rung at the *Sanctus*, the two elevations; the

clerk

clerk muſt tinkle it twice at each *Sanctus*, and at each elevation nine times, viz. thrice when the prieſt kneels down, thrice when he elevates the hoſt, and thrice when he ſets it down upon the altar. The ſame formalities are obſerved in regard to the chalice, &c. The altar is incloſed with rails, generally of curious workmanſhip, and the ſervice conducted with much ſolemnity and great ceremony.

Of the DIVINE SERVICE, *Canonical Hours, &c.*

The ſervice conſiſts of prayers and holy leſſons, which the church has appointed to be read every day by the clergy at particular hours. This ſervice is called by the church the canonical hours; becauſe it was ordained by the canons of the church, which not only preſcribed the hours in which it is to be ſaid, but likewiſe the particular circumſtances in which it is to be ſaid. This office is in general called the *breviary*, which has its name from being an abridgment of a longer ſervice, that was formerly uſed, than is at preſent.

This office is to be ſaid in a ſtanding poſture, purſuant to the ancient cuſtom of the church, and upon the knees on the days of penance.

The office conſiſts of ſeven hours, if mattins and lauds are to be reckoned one, but eight in caſe they are divided. In the more early ages it was compoſed but of ſix parts, which were *Tierce*, *Sexte*, and *None*, for the day, and for night, the evening, the midnight, and morning prayers. At preſent they are divided into ſeven or eight, viz. mattins for night, lauds for the morning, prime, tierce, ſexte, none for the day, veſpers for the evening, and compline for the beginning of the night. The hour of ſaying prime, is directly after ſun-riſing, tierce is fixed to the third hour of the day, ſexte at the ſixth, none at the ninth hour, veſpers towards the evening, and compline after ſun-ſet; and due care is taken

taken that theſe offices be all carefully performed at or near the times here ſpecified *.

The habits of the Pope, biſhops, deacons, and other inferior officers, are variouſly modified, according to the time, place, occaſion, &c. †

Of the CEREMONIES *of the* MASS.

We ſhall now lay before our readers, in a conciſe manner, the ceremonies of the maſs, which the Catholics look upon as the moſt acceptable of all adorations, and the moſt effectual of all prayers. The church not only prays herſelf at this ſacrifice, which the prieſt offers up to God in the moſt ſolemn manner, but Jeſus Chriſt, by the ſacrifice of his own body, offers up to his Father the moſt perfect adoration that can poſſibly be paid him, ſince it is offered by a God.

The maſs conſiſts of two parts, viz. the firſt, from the beginning to the offering, which was formerly called the maſs of the catechumens; and the ſecond, from the offering to the concluſion, called the maſs of the faithful. All perſons without diſtinction were preſent at it till the offering; then the deacon crieth out, *holy things are for ſuch as are holy; let the profane depart hence.*

* The Papiſts pretend great antiquity for canonical hours; they are undoubtedly derived from Judaiſm, or we may trace their original from Paganiſm. The heathens had their mattins, and the Egyptians ſaluted their gods every morning; they had alſo their primes, ſeconds, and tierces, which we call prime, tierce, ſexte, &c.——See Du Choul on the Religion of the Ancients *.

* *See likewiſe Picart's Ceremonies, vol. I. p.* 312.

† When the Pope celebrates maſs himſelf, the cardinals appear in white damaſk robes laced with gold. The cardinal biſhops wear copes, the cardinal prieſts chaſubles; the cardinal deacons, tunics, and all of them white damaſk mitres. The biſhops wear copes too, but they are of rich ſilks embroidered with gold, and white linen mitres ſewed on paſte-boards.

clerk muſt tinkle it twice at each *Sanctus*, and at each elevation nine times, viz. thrice when the prieſt kneels down, thrice when he elevates the hoſt, and thrice when he ſets it down upon the altar. The ſame formalities are obſerved in regard to the chalice, &c. The altar is incloſed with rails, generally of curious workmanſhip, and the ſervice conducted with much ſolemnity and great ceremony.

Of the DIVINE SERVICE, *Canonical Hours, &c.*

The ſervice conſiſts of prayers and holy leſſons, which the church has appointed to be read every day by the clergy at particular hours. This ſervice is called by the church the canonical hours; becauſe it was ordained by the canons of the church, which not only preſcribed the hours in which it is to be ſaid, but likewiſe the particular circumſtances in which it is to be ſaid. This office is in general called the *breviary*, which has its name from being an abridgment of a longer ſervice, that was formerly uſed, than is at preſent.

This office is to be ſaid in a ſtanding poſture, purſuant to the ancient cuſtom of the church, and upon the knees on the days of penance.

The office conſiſts of ſeven hours, if mattins and lauds are to be reckoned one, but eight in caſe they are divided. In the more early ages it was compoſed but of ſix parts, which were *Tierce*, *Sexte*, and *None*, for the day, and for night, the evening, the midnight, and morning prayers. At preſent they are divided into ſeven or eight, viz. mattins for night, lauds for the morning, prime, tierce, ſexte, none for the day, veſpers for the evening, and compline for the beginning of the night. The hour of ſaying prime, is directly after ſun-riſing, tierce is fixed to the third hour of the day, ſexte at the ſixth, none at the ninth hour, veſpers towards the evening, and compline after ſun-ſet; and due care is taken

taken that theſe offices be all carefully performed at or near the times here ſpecified *.

The habits of the Pope, biſhops, deacons, and other inferior officers, are variouſly modified, according to the time, place, occaſion, &c. †

Of the CEREMONIES *of the* MASS.

We ſhall now lay before our readers, in a conciſe manner, the ceremonies of the maſs, which the Catholics look upon as the moſt acceptable of all adorations, and the moſt effectual of all prayers. The church not only prays herſelf at this ſacrifice, which the prieſt offers up to God in the moſt ſolemn manner, but Jeſus Chriſt, by the ſacrifice of his own body, offers up to his Father the moſt perfect adoration that can poſſibly be paid him, ſince it is offered by a God.

The maſs conſiſts of two parts, viz. the firſt, from the beginning to the offering, which was formerly called the maſs of the catechumens; and the ſecond, from the offering to the concluſion, called the maſs of the faithful. All perſons without diſtinction were preſent at it till the offering; then the deacon crieth out, *holy things are for ſuch as are holy; let the profane depart hence.*

* The Papiſts pretend great antiquity for canonical hours; they are undoubtedly derived from Judaiſm, or we may trace their original from Paganiſm. The heathens had their mattins, and the Egyptians ſaluted their gods every morning; they had alſo their primes, ſeconds, and tierces, which we call prime, tierce, ſexte, &c.——See Du Choul on the Religion of the Ancients *.

* *See likewiſe Picart's Ceremonies, vol. I. p.* 312.

† When the Pope celebrates maſs himſelf, the cardinals appear in white damaſk robes laced with gold. The cardinal biſhops wear copes, the cardinal prieſts chaſubles; the cardinal deacons, tunics, and all of them white damaſk mitres. The biſhops wear copes too, but they are of rich ſilks embroidered with gold, and white linen mitres ſewed on paſte-boards.

Monsieur Picart presents us with thirty-five curious prints to illustrate the several descriptions of those ceremonies *.

I. The priest goes to the altar, in allusion to our Lord's retreat with his Apostles to the garden of Olives.

II. Before he begins mass, he says a preparatory prayer. The priest is then to look on himself as one abandoned of God, and driven out of paradise for the sin of Adam.

III. The priest makes confession for himself, and for the people, in which it is required that he be free from mortal and from venial sin.

IV. The priest kisses the altar, as a token of our reconciliation with God, and our Lord's being betrayed by a kiss.

V. The priest goes to the epistle side of the altar, and thurifies or perfumes it. Jesus Christ is now supposed to be taken and bound.

VI. The *Introite*, said or sung, *i. e.* a psalm or hymn, applicable to the circumstance of our Lord's being carried before Caiaphas the high-priest.

VII. The priest says the *Kyrie Eloison*, which signifies, Lord have mercy upon us, three times, in allusion to Peter's denying our Lord thrice.

VIII. The priest turning towards the altar, says, *Dominus vobiscum*, i. e. The Lord be with you: the people return this salutation, *cum Spiritu tuo*, and with thy Spirit, Jesus Christ looking at Peter.

IX. The priest reads the epistle relating to Jesus being accused before Pilate.

X. The priest bowing before the altar, says, *Mund cor*, i. e. Cleanse our hearts. The gradual is sung. This psalm is varied according as it is the time of Lent or not. The devotion is now directed to our Saviour's being accused before Herod, and making no reply.

* Vol. I. p. 324. & seq. See also the Explanation of the Mass.

XI. The

XI. The prieſt reads the goſpel wherein Jeſus Chriſt is ſent from Herod to Pilate. The goſpel is carried from the right ſide of the altar to the left, to denote the tender of the goſpel to the Gentiles after refuſal by the Jews.

XII. The prieſt uncovers the chalice, hereby to repreſent our Lord was ſtripped in order to be ſcourged.

XIII. The oblation of the hoſt, the creed is ſung by the congregation. The prieſt then kiſſes the altar, then the prieſt offers up the hoſt, which is to repreſent or import the ſcourging of Jeſus Chriſt, which was introductory to his other ſufferings.

XIV. The prieſt elevates the chalice, then covers it. Here Jeſus's being crowned with thorns is thereby figured to the mind, ſhewing that he was going to be elevated a victim; and it is well known the victims of the Pagans were crowned before they were ſacrificed to their idols.

XV. The prieſt waſhes his fingers, as Pilate waſhed his hands, declares Jeſus innocent, bleſſes the bread and the wine, bleſſes the frankincenſe, and perfumes the bread and wine, praying that the ſmell of this ſacrifice may be more acceptable to him than the ſmoke of victims.

XVI. The prieſt turning to the people, ſays, *Oratre Fratres*, i. e. let us pray. He then bows himſelf to the altar, addreſſes himſelf to the Trinity, and prays in a very low voice. This is one of the ſecretums of the maſs, and the imagination of the devout Chriſtian is to find out the conformity between this and Chriſt being cloathed with a purple robe; but we ſhall be cautious of adding more on this head, that we may not loſe ourſelves in the boundleſs ocean of alluſions.

XVII. The prieſt ſays the preface at the cloſe of the *Secretum*. This part of the maſs is in affinity to Jeſus Chriſt being condemned to be crucified. The prieſt uſes a prayer to God the Father, which is

followed by the *Sanctus*, holy, holy, holy is the Lord, &c. which the people ſing.

XVIII. The prieſt joining his hands, prays for the faithful that are living. This is ſaid to be in alluſion to Jeſus Chriſt bearing the croſs to die upon, that we might live.

XIX. The prieſt covers with a cloth the hoſt and chalice, St. Veronica offering her handkerchief to Jeſus Chriſt.

XX. The prieſt makes the ſign of the croſs upon the hoſt and chalice, to ſignify that Jeſus Chriſt is nailed to the croſs.

XXI. The prieſt adores the hoſt before elevated, and then he raiſes it up, in the beſt manner, to repreſent our Saviour lifted up upon the croſs. He repeats the Lord's prayer, with his arms extended, that his body might repreſent the figure of a croſs, which is the enſign of Chriſtianity.

XXII. The prieſt likewiſe conſecrates the chalice, and elevates it, to repreſent the blood of Jeſus Chriſt ſhed upon the croſs.

XXIII. The prieſt ſays the *Memento* for the faithful that are in purgatory. This prayer is in alluſion to that which our Lord made for his enemies; but this alluſion would be forced and unnatural, unleſs the devotees looked upon themſelves as his enemies.

XXIV. The prieſt then raiſes his voice, ſmiting his breaſt, begs God's bleſſing on himſelf and congregation, for the ſake of ſuch ſaints as he enumerates, and implores the divine Majeſty for a place in paradiſe, to imitate the thief upon the croſs.

XXV. The prieſt elevates the hoſt and cup, and ſays the *per omnia*, then the Lord's prayer. The ſign of the croſs, which he makes on the hoſt, the chalice, and the altar, is to repreſent to God that bleeding ſacrifice which his ſon offered up to him of himſelf; then the devout Chriſtian becomes the child

child of God, and is in alluſion to the virgin Mary's being bid to look on St. John as her ſon.

XXVI. After the Lord's prayer, the prieſt ſays a private one to God, to procure his peace by the mediation of the Virgin Mary and the ſaints, then puts the ſacred hoſt upon the paten, and breaks it, to repreſent Jeſus Chriſt giving up the ghoſt.

XXVII. The prieſt puts a little bit of the hoſt into the chalice. The true Chriſtian is now with an eye of faith to behold Jeſus Chriſt deſcending into *Limbo*, i. e. hell.

XXVIII. Then the prieſt ſays, and the people ſing, *Agnus Dei*, &c. thrice over, and the prieſt ſmites his breaſt. This action is an alluſion to thoſe who, having ſeen our Lord's ſufferings, returned home ſmiting their breaſts.

XXIX. After the *Agnus Dei* is ſung, the prieſt ſays a private prayer for the peace of the church. He then kiſſes the altar, and the inſtrument of peace called the paxis, which being received at his hands by the deacon, it is handed about to the people to be kiſſed, and paſſed from each other with theſe words, *peace be with you*; and whilſt the paxis is kiſſing, the prieſt prepares himſelf for the communion by two other prayers, when he adores the hoſt, and then ſays with a low voice, *I will eat of the celeſtial bread*; and ſmiting his breaſt, ſays, *I am not worthy that thou ſhouldeſt enter into my houſe*, three times after eating of the bread. He uncovers the chalice, repeating verſ. 1. of the 115th pſalm according to the Vulgate. When the prieſt has received the communion, he adminiſters it to the people. The application of theſe ceremonies is to the death and burial of Jeſus Chriſt, and his deſcent into hell.

XXX. After this the prieſt, putting the wine into the chalice, in order to take what is called the ablution, repeats a ſhort prayer; then he cauſeth wine and water to be poured out for the ſecond ablu-

tion, accompanied with another ſhort prayer, and then ſalutes the congregation. Theſe ablutions allegorically repreſent the waſhing and embalming the body of Jeſus Chriſt, &c.

XXXI. The prieſt ſings the poſt communion, or prayer for a good effect of the ſacrament then received, expreſſed by the glorious reſurrection of the regenerate Chriſtians, and is to be looked upon as the repreſentation of our Lord's reſurrection.

XXXII. The prieſt turning to the people, ſays, *Dominus vobiſcum*, ſalutes the congregation, as the ambaſſador of Chriſt, with the meſſage of peace.

XXXIII. The prieſt reads the beginning of St. John's goſpel, and particularly of Jeſus's appearing to his mother and diſciples, and uſes ſome ſhort prayers.

XXXIV. The prieſt diſmiſſes the people with theſe words, *Ite, miſſa eſt*, depart, the maſs is concluded: to which they anſwer, God be thanked. This, they ſay, points to the aſcenſion of Jeſus Chriſt, where he receives the eternal reward of that ſacrifice, both as prieſt and victim.

XXXV. The people receive the benediction of the prieſt or biſhop, if he is preſent, to repreſent the bleſſings promiſed, and poured down upon the apoſtles by the Holy Ghoſt.

This benediction muſt be given after kiſſing, with eyes erected to heaven, and their arms ſtretched out, and then gently brought back to the ſtomach, that the hands may join in an affectionate manner for the congregation of the faithful. The extenſion of the arms, and joining of the arms, are both myſterious, and ſhew the charity with which the prieſt calls his ſpiritual brethren to God. When he pronounces the benediction, he muſt lean in an engaging poſture towards the altar, as preſcribed by the Italian ſymbolical authors, viz. Piſcara, Baudry, and others. *

* Picart's Religious Ceremonies, vol. I.

Of

Of the ADORATION *of the* HOST.

The hoſt, or conſecrated wafer, among the Roman Catholics, they worſhip with the profoundeſt reverence; of which Dr. Middleton relates as follows. "This celebrated act of Popiſh idolatry, the adoration of the hoſt, I muſt confeſs that I cannot find the leaſt reſemblance of it in any part of the Pagan worſhip; and as oft as I have been ſtanding by at maſs, and ſeen the whole congregation proſtrate on the ground in the humbleſt poſture of adoring at the elevation of this conſecrated piece of bread, I could not help reflecting on that paſſage of Tully, when ſpeaking of the abſurdity of the Heathens in the choice of their Gods. But, ſays he, was any man ever ſo mad as to take that which he feeds upon for a God? This was an extravagance reſerved for Popery alone, and is now become the principal part of worſhip, and the diſtinguiſhing article of faith in the creed of modern Rome *.

The general diviſion of maſſes is into *high* and *low*. *High maſs*, called alſo *grand maſs*, is that ſung by the choriſters, and celebrated with the aſſiſtance of a deacon and a ſubdeacon. *Low maſs* is that wherein the prayers are barely rehearſed, without any ſinging, and performed without much ceremony, or the aſſiſtance of a deacon and ſubdeacon. As to ordinary maſſes, there are ſome which are ſaid for the Chriſtian's ſoul, for releaſing it from purgatory, or mitigating its puniſhment there. A ſufficient ſum muſt be left to the prieſt for this purpoſe. The dying man ſometimes bequeathes 20 or 30,000 maſſes to his ſoul, charging the paſtor, on whom he principally relies, to remit this ſtock to him in the other world. There are likewiſe *private maſſes* for the recovery of ſtolen goods, for health, and for travellers, or for returning God thanks for particular mercies; theſe are called *votive maſſes*. The

* Middleton's Letters, p. 179.

maſs uſed at ſea, where the cup is omitted, leſt the wine ſhould be ſpilt by the ſhip's motion, is called the *dry maſs*.

There are ſeveral ſorts of ſolemn maſſes; ſuch are the collegiate, the pontifical, thoſe celebrated before the Pope, cardinals, or biſhops, at Chriſtmas, Paſſion week, &c.

When HIGH MASS is performed epiſcopally, or by a biſhop, it is attended with more ceremony and magnificence. As ſoon as the biſhop is obſerved to come in ſight, the bells are rung; on his ſetting his foot within the church-doors, the organs begin to play. The maſter of the ceremonies gives the ſprinkler to the head canon, who preſents it, after he has kiſſed both that and his ſacred hand. His lordſhip ſprinkles himſelf, and then the canons, with it, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; and then goes and ſays a prayer before the altar, on which ſtands the holy ſacrament, at a deſk prepared for that particular purpoſe, and does the ſame at the high altar; from whence he withdraws into the veſtry, and there puts on his peculiar ornaments, in the following order.

The ſubdeacon goes to a little cloſet contiguous to the altar, and takes from thence the epiſcopal ſandals and ſtockings, which he elevates and preſents to the biſhop. Then the deacon kneels down, and pulls off his lordſhip's ſhoes and ſtockings, who is in the midſt of ſeven or eight acolites, or readers, all upon their knees, as well as the deacon, in their reſpective habits, who ſpreads the prelate's robes. Two acolites, after they have waſhed their hands, take the ſacred habiliments, holds them up, and gives them to the two deacon aſſiſtants, to put upon the biſhop as ſoon as he has waſhed his hands. The deacon ſalutes the biſhop, takes off his upper garment, and puts on his *amiot*, the croſs whereof he kiſſes; then they give him the albe, the girdle, the croſs for his breaſt, the ſtole, and pluvial. He kiſſes the croſs upon receiving each of them, thereby

to

to teſtify his veneration of the croſs; the deacons and aſſiſtants likewiſe kiſs theſe ſacred veſtments. As ſoon as the biſhop is ſeated, they put his mitre on, and a prieſt preſents him with the paſtoral ring. The deacon gives him his right glove, and the ſub-deacon his left, which each of them kiſs, as alſo the hand they have the honour to ſerve in all theſe circumſtances. There are ſome pretty ceremonies to be obſerved, which thoſe who are fond of myſteries may endeavour to account for. It is more material to acquaint our readers, that ejaculatory prayers have been adapted to each individual piece of the epiſcopal robes, and that the devotion of this ceremony is ſupported and confirmed by the ſinging the office of tierce. *

The biſhop being thus dreſt in all his habiliments †, his clergy range themſelves round about him. Two deacons, who are canons, place themſelves on each ſide of him, both in their dalmaticas; and after them a deacon and ſubdeacon. Then the incenſe-bearer with the cenſer, and a prieſt with the navet, out of which the biſhop takes incenſe, puts it into the cenſer, and gives it his benediction. After this he

* Prayers intended to return God thanks for the ſanctification of his church by the Holy Ghoſt.

† Each of theſe have a myſterious ſignificance; the *ſtole* repreſents the yoke of the goſpel; the *ſhoes* being taken off, alludes to Moſes putting off his ſhoes; the *Dalmatica* is to repreſent to the deacon that he muſt be crucified to the world: the *albe* denotes the purity of the prieſt's ſoul; the *paſtoral ring* implies the prieſt's ſpiritual marriage with the church; his *gloves* are to denote that he is inſenſible of his good works; the *girdle*, that he will be girded with juſtice and virtue; the *ſandals*, that is to walk in the paths of the Lord; the horns of the *mitre*, the Old and New Teſtament; the ſhepherd's *crook*, his correction and paternal authority; the *pluvial*, which was formerly uſed by travellers, to repreſent the miſeries of this life, and thus the biſhop is to become a living image of the true Chriſtian. This account is given by Caſalius: but to ſhew us the propriety and reality of theſe pretended characters, requires ſome farther explication and proof. Picart's Ceremonies, vol. I. p. 335.

kiſſes

kiſſes the croſs, which is upon the veſtry altar, and then goes in proceſſion to the other altar, where he is to celebrate the maſs. The incenſe-bearer walks at the head of the proceſſion; two wax-candle bearers, with lighted tapers in their hands, march next on each ſide of him who bears the croſs; all the clergy follow them; the ſubdeacon who is to ſing the epiſtle, carries before his breaſt the New Teſtament ſhut, with the biſhop's maniple in it; a deacon and prieſt march juſt before the biſhop; the biſhop carrying his ſhepherd's crook in his left hand, to diſpenſe his bleſſings to thoſe good Chriſtians he paſſes in the way. The biſhop being advanced to the altar, bows himſelf once to the clergy, and when he enters on the firſt ſtep of the altar, delivers his crook to the ſubdeacon, and the deacon takes off the mitre; then the prelate and clergy bow to the altar, or rather to the croſs on the altar; after which the clergy withdraw, except two prieſts aſſiſtants, one on his right, and the other on his left hand, with the incenſe-bearer, the ſubdeacon, and two deacons aſſiſtants, and then the ceremony of the maſs ſervice begins with the *Confiteor* *, &c. and the choir ſings the introite §.

The SOLEMN MASS, *celebrated by the* POPE,

Has much of magnificence and ceremony: we ſhall relate a ſimple part †. A pontifical ſolemn maſs principally differs in two reſpects, always obſerved, when his holineſs himſelf officiates. The firſt is this, the two goſpels are ſung, one in Greek, and the other in Latin; the ſecond, that the communion is different in the papal maſs, and performed after the following manner: after the *Agnus Dei* is ſung, his holineſs goes to his throne; the cardinal deacon of the goſpel ſtands in ſuch a manner on the epiſtle ſide, with his hands clo-

* See Picart's Religious Cer. vol. I. p. 336.

§ Offices, Veſtments, and other Diſtinctions, ſee the Dict.

† Apion's Account, in his Tableau de la Cour de Rome, and Picart's Cer. vol. I. p. 339.

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ſed together, that he cannot only ſee the ſacrament on the altar, but the Pope likewiſe going to his throne. When his holineſs is ſeated, the deacon goes and takes the conſecrated hoſt upon the paten, covered with a veil, and, turning to the people, elevates it three times ſucceſſively, that is to ſay, in the middle and at each end of the altar. After that he gives it to the ſubdeacon, who carries it to his holineſs; in the mean time, the ſame deacon takes the chalice, in which is the conſecrated wine, and having elevated it three times as he did the water before, carries it to the Pope, who adore Jeſus Chriſt under both kinds, as ſoon as they are brought to him, which he performs with a moderately low bow of half his body in a ſtanding poſture; and when the deacon and ſub deacon are come cloſe to him, they place themſelves one on his right hand, and the other on his left hand; his holineſs takes the large hoſt which is upon the paten, and communicates, putting it into his mouth: he then gives two ſmall ones to the deacon and ſubdeacon, who are kneeling, and kiſſes his hand before they receive them. The deacon however ſtill holds the chalice, till the aſſiſtant cardinal biſhop, dreſſed in his cope, comes up to the pontifical throne, when the Pope's veſtry-keeper preſents him with a ſmall gold Pope, one end whereof he dips into the chalice, and his holineſs at the ſame time takes hold of the other, and inclining his head a little, ſucks up a part of the conſecrated wine, leaving the reſt to the deacon, who carries the chalice to the altar, and there ſucks up a part of it, and leaves a little for the ſubdeacon, who drinks it without the Pipe, as alſo that which is poured out for the ablution of the chalice, which he wipes with the purificatory, or white linen cloth: in the mean time his holineſs gives the kiſs of peace only to the deacon, and the communion only under one kind to the other cardinals, ambaſſadors, princes, prelates, and ſometimes to private perſons, who have deſired to receive that mark

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of honour from him *, after which he returns to the altar, and goes through the maſs with the uſual ceremonies and ſolemnity.

We might here relate the peculiar ceremonies attending high maſs at Chriſtmas, when his holineſs officiates, who, being dreſſed in all his pontifical ornaments (the moſt remarkable whereof on this occaſion are the white pluvial and precious mitre) by the cardinal deacons already in their robes, bleſſes the incenſe preſented to the thurifier; after that the pontiff is preceded by the Roman and other prelates, who all wear white mitres.

The incenſe-bearer, and ſeven acolites, each with a wax-taper in his hands, walk before the croſs-bearer, and a clerk of the chamber before the incenſe-bearer, who holds a ſword lifted up, with a cap upon it, which is a repreſentation perhaps of the irreſiſtible power and efficacy of the pontifical ſword, which Chriſt's vicar has inherited from St. Paul, with that of freeing Chriſtians from the bondage of the devil, by a right acquired by the ſon of God, whoſe nativity is then celebrated. It is conſidered likewiſe as an emblem of the church's dignity and freedom under the government of the Pope. Many of the ſuperior clergy make up this holy proceſſion; and ſhould the Emperor, or any other ſovereign prince, happen to be at Rome at that time, he muſt carry the train of the Pope's mantle; two cardinals likewiſe hold up the two ends of it. His holineſs walks in a very ſtately and majeſtic manner, under a canopy ſupported by eight gentlemen of the firſt rank.

As ſoon as the Pope is got into the church, he paſſes on to a chapel, and then ſits down. The cardinals come and bow to him, and kiſs the hem of the holy father's pluvial on the right ſide; then comes the other prelates in order, and kiſs his right knee. The Latin and Greek deacons, who aſſiſt his holineſs, ſtand

* The Emperor and the King of France always receive in both kinds.

in

in readineſs at the altar. After ſome anthems are ſung, a veſtry-keeper puts on the arms of a Latin ſubdeacon, a ſmall napkin, whereon are laid his holineſs's ſandals and ſtockings. The ſubdeacon carries altogether to the Pope, with his hands held up to his eyes. The acolites follow him, and whilſt the ſubdeacon and a gentleman of the privy chamber get under the holy father's pluvial, to put on his ſtockings and his ſandals, the acolites take care to ſpread the borders of the pluvial whilſt the ſubdeacon is putting them on. The aſſiſtant biſhops who are preſent at this religious ceremony hold before his holineſs a book and a wax-taper, who, with his aſſiſtant deacons, ſings an anthem and a pſalm. The choir ſing tierce, during which the Pope riſes, and an aſſiſtant biſhop goes up to him with the pontifical; two taper-bearers attend with lights in their hands. The pontiff takes off his mitre, which is done frequently in this ceremony, and puts it on again. Then an aſſiſtant biſhop lays the pontifical on his own head, that his holineſs may read the office of the day, and another aſſiſtant ſupports the book in one hand, and holds a taper in the other: when the pontiff is ſeated again, and his mitre put on, he is preſented with ſome water to waſh him. His holineſs having waſhed, the goſpel deacon, aſſiſted with two others, takes off his mitre, pluvial, and ſtole, in order to put on ſeveral other robes, which the acolites bring him from the altar, viz. the girdle, the breaſt-croſs, the dalmatica, the tunic, the albe, the gloves, &c. all which muſt be devoutly kiſſed, and the *pallium*, the croſs whereof his holineſs kiſſes. Laſtly, they put the ring on his finger, called the pontifical ring. His holineſs thus equipped, and followed by two auditors, holding up the corners of the pluvial, humbly proceeds to the *Confiteor* before the ſteps of the altar, and the three youngeſt cardinal prieſts advance to kiſs the holy father's mouth and his breaſt. Then the goſpel deacon cenſes his holineſs, and his holineſs the altar, and

then

then the ceremony of the ſervice begins; during which there is the ceremony of delivering to the Pope a purſe with twenty-five julio's in it of antique money; and the ſubdeacons and the maſter of the ceremonies kiſs the Pope's feet, with ſome other inſignificant ceremonies.

Of ſaying the Maſs in LATIN.

The Catholics ſay it is no hindrance to the devotion of the common people in the leaſt, provided they be well inſtructed in the nature of this ſacrifice, and taught how to accompany the prieſt with prayers and devotions adapted to every part of the maſs; ſuch as they commonly have in their *Manuals*, or other prayer-books.

It is a common ſacrifice that is offered for all, and in ſome manner by all; but as for the particular form of prayers uſed by the prieſt in the maſs, there is no obligation for the faithful to recite the ſame. All that God or his church requires from them, is to aſſiſt at that ſacrifice with attention and devotion; and this they fully comply with, when they endeavour to follow the directions given by them, and uſe ſuch prayers as are beſt adapted to each part of the maſs; though they be not the ſame as the prieſt uſes.

Of the Proceſſion on GOOD-FRIDAY.

The gloomy ſolemnity of the day does not permit of certain honours which otherwiſe would be paid to his holineſs. The cardinals don't bow to him, nor do the miniſters who are to ſing the paſſion kiſs his foot. When thoſe who ſing the ſervice come to thoſe words, "having "bowed down his head, he yielded up the ghoſt," the Pope, the miniſter who officiates, and the reſt of the congregation, turn themſelves towards the altar, kneel down, and pray with a very low voice. In the night

hight, at 22 o'clock, according to the Italian manner of counting the hours, the Greeks perform the obſequies of our Saviour, in their own tongue, round a great crucifix, and on a bed of ſtate, adorned with flowers. At Courtray, a town in the Auſtrian Netherlands, there is a proceſſion on Good-Friday to mount Calvary. The city gives twenty-five livres to a poor man to repreſent the ſuffering Saviour, while the monks aſſure him of ſalvation if he die under the wounds or blows given him.---nor is the proceſſion at Bruſſels, in which the crucifixion of our Lord is repreſented, leſs extraordinary in its circumſtances. The city and court join in the ſolemnity, which is attended with ſuch a parade of ceremonies as are too numerous to mention *.

The PRONE *or* HOMILY.

The Prone, or Homily, is too conſiderable a part of the ſervice to be omitted. Under the word Prone, *Alet's Ritual* tells us, we are to include the inſtruction which is given to the people relating to what is neceſſary for ſalvation; the prayers of the church in a peculiar manner for the faithful; the publication of feſtivals, faſts, banns of matrimony, holy orders, marriages, and other things concerning the diſcipline of the church. The Prone follows the goſpel, becauſe this part of divine ſervice is particularly intended for the explication of the myſteries of religion, and the ſacred writings. This is performed with ſo much ceremony, that I ſhall beg leave to refer the reader to *Alet's Ritual*, or Picart's religious ceremonies, vol. I. pag. 360.

* See Picart, vol. II. pag. 26, 27, 28.

The

Of the Devotion of Catholics to the Virgin Mary.

1. It is, they say, grounded upon her great dignity as mother of God, and the close relation which she has thereby to Jesus Christ her son; for how is it possible to love and honour Christ with our whole heart, and not value and love his mother?

2. It is grounded upon that supereminent grace, which was bestowed upon her, to prepare her for that dignity; upon account of which she was saluted by the angel *Gabriel*, St. Luke, i. 28. full of *grace*, and by St. *Elizabeth* she is stiled *blessed among women*, Luke i. 42.

3. It is grounded upon her extraordinary *sanctity*; for if she was *full of grace* before she conceived in the womb the fountain of all grace, to what a degree of sanctity and grace must she have arrived, during so many years as she lived afterwards? especially since she bore nine months in her womb the author of all sanctity, and had him thirty years under her roof, ever contemplating him and his heavenly mysteries, St. Luke ii. 19 and 51. and on her part never making any resistance to the affluence of his grace ever flowing in upon her happy soul.

4. It is grounded upon that supereminent degree of heavenly glory with which God has now honoured her, in proportion to her grace and sanctity here upon earth, and the great interest she has with her blessed Son, and through him with his heavenly Father*.

Of the Use of Beads, *the* Rosary, *&c.*

Q. Why do Catholics so often repeat the *Hail, Mary*?

A. To commemorate the incarnation of the Son of God; to honour his blessed mother, and to desire her prayers.

* Catholic Instructed, p. 235.

Q. What

Q. What is the meaning of the *Beads?*

A. It is a devotion, consisting of a certain number of *our father* and *hail Maries*, directed for the obtaining of blessings from God, through the prayers and intercession of our Lady.

Q. But is it not highly absurd, that, according to the common way of laying the beads, there are repeated ten *hail Maries* for one *our father?*

A. It would be absurd indeed, and blasphemous too, if the meaning of this were to signify that the blessed Virgin is either more powerful or more merciful than her son, or that we have a greater confidence in her than in him; but we are far from any such notions.

Q. Why then is the *hail Mary* repeated so much oftener in the beads than the Lord's prayer?

A. Because the beads being a devotion particularly instituted to commemorate the incarnation of Christ, and to honour him in his blessed mother, it was thought proper to repeat so much the oftener that prayer, which is particularly adapted to these ends. In the mean time, it may be proper so take notice, 1. That if in the beads there be ten *hail Maries* said for one *our father*, in the mass and office of the church, almost all the prayers are directed to God alone. 2. That every *hail Mary*, both by the nature of the prayer, and the intention of the church, is directed more to the honour of the son than of the mother, as well because the church, in honouring the mother, has principally in view the honour of the son, as also because this prayer particularly relates to the incarnation of Christ; and if withal it begs her prayers, then she is only desired to pray for us.

To which if we add, that her prayers are ten times better and more acceptable to God than ours, it will appear no ways absurd that we should so frequently desire her prayers; for as to the repetition of the same prayer, it is what is recommended to us by the

example of our Lord, St. Matt. xxvii. 42, 44, &c. and has nothing of abſurdity in it.

Q. What is the meaning of the *Roſary?*

A. The roſary is a method of ſaying the beads, ſo as to meditate upon the incarnation, paſſion and reſurrection of Chriſt; and it is divided into three parts, each part conſiſting of five myſteries, to be contemplated during the repeating of five decads or tens upon the beads. The firſt five are called the five joyful myſteries, viz. the Anunciation, when our Lord was conceived in his mother's womb; the Viſitation, when the bleſſed Virgin viſited her kinſwoman St. Elizabeth, and by her was declared *bleſſed among women*, &c. the Nativity of our Lord, his preſentment in the temple, together with the purification of the bleſſed Virgin, and his being found in the temple in the midſt of the doctors, &c. The five next are called the dolorous and ſorrowful myſteries, as having relation to the paſſion of Chriſt, and are, his prayer and agony in the garden, his being ſcourged at the pillar, his crowning with thorns, his carriage of his croſs, and his crucifixion and death. The five laſt are called the five glorious myſteries, viz. the reſurrection of our Lord, his aſcenſion into heaven, the coming of the Holy Ghoſt, the aſſumption of the bleſſed Virgin, and her coagmenation, together with the eternal glory of the ſaints in the kingdom of heaven *.

Of the Invocation of Angels *and* Saints.

Q. What is the doctrine and practice of the Catholic church, with regard to the invocation of angels and ſaints?

A. We hold it to be pious and profitable to apply ourſelves to them in the way of deſiring them to pray to God for us; but not ſo as to addreſs ourſelves to them

* Catholic Chriſtian inſtructed, pag. 234.

as

as if they were the authors or diſpoſers of pardon, grace, or ſalvation, or as if they had any power to help us independently of God's good will and pleaſure.

Q. But, in ſome of the addreſſes made to the ſaints and angels, I find petitions for mercy, aid or defence; what ſay you?

A. The meaning of thoſe addreſſes, as far as they are authoriſed by the church, is no other than to beg mercy of the ſaints in this ſenſe, that they would pity and compaſſionate our miſery, and would pray for us. In like manner, when we beg their aid and defence, we mean to beg the aid and defence of their prayers; and that the angels to whom God has given a charge over us, would aſſiſt us and defend us againſt the angels of darkneſs; and this is no more than what the Proteſtant church aſks in the collect for Michaelmas day, praying that as the holy angels always ſerve God in heaven, ſo by his appointment they may ſuccour and defend us upon earth *.

Of the Uſe and Veneration of RELICKS *in the Catholic Church.*

Q. What do you mean by relicks?

A. The dead bodies or bones of the ſaints we call relicks; as alſo whatever other things have belonged to them in their mortal life.

Q. And what is the doctrine and practice of the church with regard to theſe things?

A. We keep ſuch things as theſe with a religious reſpect and veneration, for the ſake of thoſe to whom they have belonged, but principally for the ſake of him to whom the ſaints themſelves belonged; that is, for the greater glory of God, who is glorious in his ſaints, and to whom is referred all the honour that is given to his ſaints.

* Catholic Chriſtian, page 224.

Q. What reaſon has the church for ſhewing this reſpect to the dead bodies or bones of the ſaints?

A. 1. Becauſe they have been the victims, and the living temples of God, in which his divine Majeſty has, in a particular manner, inhabited, and which he has ſanctified by his preſence and grace; and therefore, if God required of Moſes, Exod. iii. 5. and of Joſhua, Joſh. v. 15. to looſe their ſhoes from off their feet, in reſpect to the ground on which they ſtood, as being rendered holy by his preſence, or that of his angels, we muſt think that it is agreeable to his divine Majeſty, that we ſhould teſtify the like honour to that venerable earth of the bodies of his ſaints, which he in ſuch an extraordinary manner has ſanctified, by abiding in them as in his temples. 2. We know the bodies of the ſaints are preordained to a happy reſurrection and eternal glory, and upon this account alſo deſerve our reſpect. 3. The bodies and other relicks of the ſaints have been, and are daily the inſtruments of the power of God for the working of innumerable miracles; which God, who is truth and ſanctity itſelf, would never have effected, if it had not been agreeable to him that we ſhould honour and reſpect theſe precious remnants of his ſervants. 4. The relicks and ſhrines of the martyrs and other ſaints ſerve very much to encourage the faithful to an imitation of their virtues, and to help to raiſe their ſouls from the love of things preſent and temporal to the love of things eternal.

Of Miracles *performed by or before the Images of the Virgin Mary and other Saints.*

Aringhus, touching upon this ſubject, ſays, that the images of the bleſſed Virgin ſhine out continually by new and daily miracles, to the comfort of their votaries, and the confuſion of all gainſayers. Within theſe few years, ſays he, under every Pope ſucceſſively ſome or other of our ſacred images, eſpecially of the more antient, have made themſelves illuſtrious, and

and acquired a peculiar worſhip and veneration, by the exhibition of freſh ſigns; as it is notorious to all who reſide at Rome. He inſtances the images of St. Dominica, ſo conſpicuous at this day for its never ceaſing miracles, which attract the reſort and admiration of the whole Chriſtian world *.

In a collegiate church of regular canons, called St. Mary of Imprunetta, about ſix miles from Florence, there is a miraculous picture of the *Virgin Mary*, painted by St. Luke, and held in the greateſt veneration throughout all Tuſcany, which, as oft as that ſtate happens to be viſited by any calamity, or in any peculiar danger, is ſure to be brought out and carried in proceſſion through the ſtreets of Florence, attended by the Prince himſelf, with all the nobility, magiſtrates, and clergy, where it has never failed to afford them preſent relief in the greateſt difficulties; in teſtimony of which they produce antient acts and records, confirmed by public inſcriptions, ſetting forth all the particular benefits miraculouſly obtained from each proceſſion, and the ſeveral offerings made on that account to the ſacred image for many centuries paſt, down to theſe very times †.

All their apologiſts indeed declare, that they do not aſcribe theſe miracles to any power in the image itſelf, but to the power of God, who is moved to work them by the prayers and interceſſions of his ſaints, for the benefit of thoſe that have ſought that interceſſion before the pictures or images, and in order to bear teſtimony to the faith and practice of the church in that particular article ‡.

Dr. Middleton tells us, in his letters from Rome, that they pretend to ſhew us there two orginal impreſſions of our Saviour's face, on two different hand-

* Aringhus Roma ſubterran. tom. ii. p. 464, ſect. 13. as quoted by Middleton.

† Middleton's Prefatory Diſcourſe to his Letters from Rome, page 12.

‡ Catholic Chriſtian, page 251.

kerchiefs, the one sent a present by himself to Agbarus Prince of Edessa, the other presented by him at the time of his crucifixion to a saint or holy woman named Veronica, on a handkerchief which she had lent him to wipe his face on that occasion; both which handkerchiefs are still preserved, as they affirm, and shewn with the utmost reverence; the first in St. Sepulchre's church, the second in St. Peter's, where, in honour of this sacred relic, there is a fine altar built by Pope Urban VIII. with a statue of Veronica herself, and there is a prayer in their book of offices, ordered by the rubric to be addressed to this sacred and miraculous picture, in the following terms.--- "Conduct us, O thou blessed figure, to our proper home, where we may behold the pure face of Christ *."

Of the Ceremony of carrying the CROSS *or* CRUCIFIX *before the sovereign Pontiff.*

On all common, but public occasions, the cross is carried before the sovereign Pontiff. At the end of a pike about ten palms or spans long, the image of our Saviour is turned towards the Pope; and the chaplain, who carries it, walks bareheaded, when his holiness goes in public, or is carried on mens shoulders; but when he goes in a coach or chair the chairman carries the crucifix on horseback bareheaded. But on all solémn and religious occasions where the Pope attends in his sacred robes, an auditor of the rota carries the crucifix at the solemn procession, on horseback, dressed in a rocket and capuche, or sort of cope, purple-coloured; but there are three days in Passion week on which he and the sacred college go to the chapel in mourning, without the cross being borne before him.

* Middleton's Letters from Rome, page 174.

See likewise Conformity of antient and modern Ceremonies, page 158.

We

We find likewiſe, even as early as the fourth century, the croſs was in great veneration among Chriſtians; to countenance which the Papiſts have formed many fabulous ſtories and pretended miracles. It has however been an increaſing ſuperſtition ever ſince, ſo that feſtivals have been invented in honour of the croſs. The invention of the croſs is celebrated on the third day of May; the exaltation of it on the fourteenth day of September; and one of the principal relicks is the pretended parts of the croſs on which Chriſt was crucified. The rituals preſcribe the proportionable *form* and manner in which they ſhould be made, and in which at our devotion it ſhould be figured on the breaſt. The conſecration of public and private croſſes is another ceremony, or rather a formal ſervice, in which an incredible number of ceremonies are united. The conſecration of croſſes is ſaid to be very antient, at leaſt as early as the ſeventh century: ſome celebrated crucifixes have likewiſe peculiar homage paid them; ſuch as the crucifix called *Santiſſimo Croceſiſſo* at Naples, the *Santo Volto* at Lucca, the crucifix at Loretto, the ſacred crucifix at Trent; to which we may add that of the Beguine nuns at Ghent; to all of which ſome pretended miracles are attributed *.

Of the CONSECRATION *of public and private* CROSSES.

Croſſes of all ſizes are conſecrated after the following manner: an acolite is very buſy in lighting up the candles at the foot of the croſs, and the celebrant, with a grave aſpect, is ſeated in a chair provided for this purpoſe, with his paſtoral croſier in his hand, and in the midſt of the clergy in their ſurplices, appears very intent upon this ceremony. The celebrant muſt be dreſſed in all his pontifical habilaments; the amiot, albe, girdle, ſtole, white pluvian, plain mitre,

* See Baudry, Manuale Sacr. Cerem. page 76.
Picart's Religious Ceremonies, vol. I. page 349.

and his paſtoral ſtaff; thus equipped, he preſents himſelf before the great croſs, and part of the clergy turn towards him; he makes a diſcourſe to the people on the excellence of the croſs, at the foot whereof three tapers are lighted, and then the celebrant takes off his mitre, and repeats a prayer before the croſs. The Litany follow it, and then an anthem; he then ſprinkles the croſs with holy water, and afterwards perfumes it with frankincenſe; then the candles are placed on the arms of the croſs, to which, if high, he aſcends by a ladder, and concludes with muſic, ſinging of pſalms and prayer *.

Of the ADORATION *of the Croſs.*

After nones, the officiating prieſt goes up to the altar, preceded by the acolites without tapers, and the reſt of the miniſters of the altar: they firſt kneel before it, and bow to the croſs; a duty at all times neceſſary, but more eſpecially on this day. Immediately after that the officiating prieſt repeats certain prayers with a low voice; then the acolites cover the table of the altar, and lay the *maſs book* on a black cuſhion on the epiſtle ſide; then the miniſter goes up to the altar, and kiſſes it, and afterwards repeats or ſings with a low voice the ſeveral leſſons of the day, and another miniſter after him. Prayers being ended, the officiating prieſt uncovers the top of the croſs, and elevates it with both his hands, at the ſame time ſinging theſe words, *Behold the wood of the croſs*; then the congregation riſe up with their heads uncovered, then the miniſters of the altar ſing theſe words, *on which the Saviour of the world hath ſuffered death.* The choir anſwers, *Let us come and adore it.* Then they all fall on their knees, and immediately riſe up; then the officiating prieſt uncovers the right arm of the crucifix, and the head of Jeſus; ſhews it, elevates it, and ſays as before. Then he uncovers it

* Pontific. Rom.

quite

quite, and with a louder voice repeats the ſame ceremonies. The ceremony of the adoration being ended, the deacon ſalutes the croſs, elevates it, and carries it to the altar with bended knees, and when he lays it down bows before the altar.

Of the SIGN *of the Croſs.*

The Papiſts ſay, this holy ſign is made uſe of in all the ſacraments, to give us to underſtand that they have their whole force and efficacy from the *croſs*, that is, from the death and paſſion of *Jeſus Chriſt*. *What is the ſign of* Chriſt, ſays St. *Auguſtine*, *which all know, but the croſs of* Chriſt, *which ſign, if it be not applied to the foreheads of the believers, to the water with which they are baptiſed, to the chriſm with which they are anointed, to the ſacrifice with which they are fed, none of theſe things are duly performed* *.

St. Chryſoſtom, towards the cloſe of the fourth century, diſplays alſo the miraculous cures wrought by the uſe of conſecrated oil, and by the ſign of the croſs; which laſt he calls a defence againſt all evil, and a medicine againſt all ſickneſs, and affirms it to have been miraculouſly impreſſed in his own time in peoples garments †.

Bellarmine, to juſtify this device of the ſign of the croſs, or ofcroſſing themſelves, and the wonderful virtue and benefits thence ariſing, urges the ſprinkling of the blood of the paſchal lamb on the poſts of their doors, Exod. xii. 7. God's commanding in a viſion to the prophet a mark to be ſet on ſuch of the inhabitants of Jeruſalem as had not wallowed in the ſame tranſgreſſion with the reſt, but wept for all the abominations that had been done in the midſt thereof, Ezek. ix. 4. What is this to the Papiſt's croſſing himſelf,

* Catholic Chriſtian, page 1, 2.

† T. XI. page 387. T. 5. page 271. quoted by Middleton in his Inquiry into the miraculous Powers, page 136.

to

to keep the devil from him, to make him lucky in his buſineſs, to preſerve him from ſin, to guard him from danger, &c.?

This ſuggeſts the following reflections, 1. That the ſigning one's ſelf with the croſs hath neither command nor example in ſcripture, nor any promiſe of any ſpecial grace or benefit to be thereupon conferred; therefore there is no reaſon to expect any ſuch extraordinary virtues or aſſiſtance from uſing the ſame.

2. If the ſign of the croſs was firſt inſtituted by men only to be an external mark of Chriſtians from others, then it is no ſuch ſacred and venerable ſign as to be able to convey to or operate in us ſuch bleſſings; but the firſt is plain, as well from the ſilence of ſcripture, as from the voice of hiſtory.

3. If therefore external ſigns, inſtituted by God himſelf, when they become the inſtruments or occaſion of ſuperſtition or idolatry, are to be taken away, then much more ſigns of human inſtitution, as this of the croſs is.

Therefore, ſince Papiſts have ſo horribly abuſed this ſign, every Proteſtant juſtly diſowns and proteſts againſt the ſuperſtitious and idolatrous conceits which they have introduced relating thereunto; amongſt whom the ſign of the croſs makes void the croſs of Chriſt, they attributing to the croſs that which ſolely and peculiarly belongs to Chriſt, and is the effect of his death through faith in him, but not effected by the ſign of the croſs *.

Of Fasts, Lent, Saints Days, &c. *in the Church of Rome.*

Montanus, towards the end of the ſecond century, was the firſt that we read of who inſtituted laws concerning faſting. Miltiades, biſhop of Rome, or-

* See Hiſtory of Popery, vol. I. part 1. page 110. Dr. Middleton's Letters from Rome, page 145.

dained

dained, A. C. 311, that none ſhould faſt on Thurſdays or Sundays, becauſe Thurſday Chriſt inſtituted his ſupper, and on Sunday he aſcended into heaven. Pope Gregory I. in the ſixth century, excepted Sundays only, and added four days to Lent, viz. Aſh-Wedneſday, and the three following days, to make up the number of forty days which Chriſt faſted, and prohibited the eating not only fleſh, but cheeſe, milk and eggs. Pope Gregory II. decreed, that, in Lent, they ſhould faſt on Thurſday as well as other days. In the eighth century, Pope Gregory VII. decreed, that Saturday ſhould be kept as a day of faſting, becauſe on that day Chriſt lay in his ſepulchre. Pope Sylveſter appointed Friday to be obſerved as a day of faſting in memory of our Lord's paſſion. Pope Honorius III. ordered, that when Chriſtmas day happened on a Friday, they ſhould feaſt and rejoice, and not faſt. Pope Urban VI. appointed that the eves of the three feaſts attributed to the Virgin Mary ſhould be faſted on, viz. the Viſitation, the Aſſumption, and Nativity *; but Irenæus ſays, that ſome faſted one day only, ſome two days, ſome more in the time of Lent, and it was in his time that the unity of faith was well maintained, notwithſtanding this variety †. Would you know the reaſon why fiſh is permitted to be eaten on faſt-days, Durandus has informed us ‡, viz. becauſe God never curſed the waters; becauſe the remiſſion of ſins is promiſed to water-baptiſm, and the ſpirit of the Lord moved upon the face of the waters. The Popes of Rome require all Chriſtians to obſerve the faſts according to the practice of the church of Rome, and have declared a violation a mortal ſin, reſerving however to themſelves the power of granting diſpenſations to as many as can pay well for them.

* See this more fully in the Hiſtory of Popery, vol. I. page 100.
† Euſebius, lib. v. cap. 26.
‡ Durandus's Rationale, lib. vi.

Of

Of EXORCISMS *and* BENEDICTIONS, *of Bleſſings of Creatures in the Catholic Church, and of the Uſe of Holy-Water.*

Q. What do you mean by exorciſms?

A. The rites and prayers inſtituted by the church for the caſting out devils, or reſtraining them from hurting perſons, diſquieting places, or abuſing any of God's creatures to our harm.

Q. What is the meaning of bleſſing ſo many things in the Catholic church?

A. We bleſs churches and other places ſet aſide for divine ſervice, altars, chalices, veſtments, &c. by way of devoting them to holy uſes. We bleſs our meats, and other inanimate things, which God has given us for our uſe, that we may uſe them with moderation in a manner agreeable to God's inſtitution; that they may be ſerviceable to us, and that the devil may have no power to abuſe them to our prejudice. We bleſs candles, ſalt, water, &c. by way of begging of God that ſuch as religiouſly uſe them may obtain bleſſings, &c.

Of the Exorciſm of SALT.

I exorciſe thee, O creature of ſalt, by the living God, by the true God, by the holy God, by that God who, by the prophet Eliſha, commanded thee to be caſt into the water, to cure its barrenneſs, that thou mayeſt by this exorciſm be made beneficial to the faithful, and become to all them that make uſe of thee, healthful both to ſoul and body; and that in what place ſoever thou ſhall be ſprinkled, all illuſions and wickedneſs, and crafty wiles of Satan, may be chaſed away, and depart from that place; and every unclean ſpirit commanded in his name, who is

is to come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire. *Amen.*

Of the Exorciſm of the WATER.

I exorciſe thee, O creature of water, in the name of God, the Father Almighty, and in the name of Jeſus Chriſt his Son our Lord, and in the virtue of the Holy Ghoſt, that thou mayeſt by this exorciſm have power to chaſe away all the power of the enemy; that thou mayeſt be enabled to caſt him out, and put him to flight with all his apoſtate angels, by virtue of the ſame Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who is to come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire. *Amen.*

Then the prieſt mingles the ſalt with the water, ſaying,

May the ſalt and water be mixed together, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt. *Amen.*

Q. But does it not ſavour of ſuperſtition to attribute any virtue to ſuch inanimate things as bleſſed candles, holy water, *Agnus Dei*'s, &c.

A. It is no ſuperſtition to look for a good effect from the prayers of the church of God, and it is in virtue of theſe prayers that we hope for benefit from theſe things, when uſed with faith, and daily experience ſhews us that our hopes are not vain.

Q. What do you mean by *Agnus Dei*'s?

A. Wax ſtamped with the image of the lamb of God, bleſſed by the Pope with ſolemn prayers, and anointed with the holy chriſm *.

Of the great VARIETY *of their Religious Orders and Societies of* PRIESTS.

Theſe ſeem, ſays Dr. Middleton, to be formed upon the plan of the old colleges or fraternities of the

* Catholic Chriſtian, page 257.

augurs,

augurs, pontifices, ſalii, fratres arvales, &c. The veſtal virgins might furniſh the hint for the foundation of nunneries; and I hence obſerved, ſays he, ſomething very like to the rules and auſterities of the monaſtic life in the character and manner of ſeveral prieſts of the heathens; but above all in the old deſcriptions of the lazy mendicant prieſts among the heathens, who uſed to travel with bags on their backs, and raiſe contributions of money, bread and wine; wherein we ſee the very picture of their begging friers, who are always about the ſtreets in the ſame habit, and on the ſame errand *.

Cicero, in his book of laws, reſtrains the practice of begging alms to one particular order of prieſts, and that only on certain days; becauſe, as he ſays, it propagates ſuperſtition, and impoveriſhes families, which plainly diſcovers the policy of the church of Rome in the great care that they have taken to multiply their begging orders.

Of Washing *the Feet of the Poor.*

The Pope and Cardinals being come to the ducal wall, where the ceremony of waſhing the feet is to be performed, the cardinal deacon aſſiſtants clothe his holineſs with his purple, ſtole, his red cope, and plain mitre. Their nunneries are clothed in purple copes, and his holineſs puts three ſpoonfuls of odoriferous ſpices into the thurable, and gives his bleſſing to the cardinal deacon who is to ſing the goſpel; after which one of the apoſtolical ſubdeacons gives the Pope a book of the New Teſtment to kiſs, and the cardinal deacon incenſes him three times; immediately after a chorus of muſicians ſing theſe words, *A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another*; then the Pope takes off his cope, and putting on a white apron, waſhes the feet of thirteen poor

* Dr. Middleton's Letters from Rome, page 220.

prieſt

prieſt ſtrangers, who ſit on a high form or bench, cloathed in white camblet, with a kind of coul that reaches down to the middle of the arm. They are firſt waſhed clean with ſoap before they are preſented to him to waſh, and he then waſhes them, and then the *major domo* preſents them a napkin, and the Pope's treaſurer preſents them with two medals, one of gold, and the other of ſilver; then the Pope returns to his ſeat, and waſhes his hands, and then they ſing the Lord's prayer, and other prayers in Latin. The magiſtrates of Rome are preſent at this ceremony, which ends with a ſumptuous entertainment. This practice of waſhing the poors feet is ſolemniſed on Holy Thurſday by all the princes of the Romiſh religion in Europe.---In France the king's chief phyſician makes choice of twelve children for that purpoſe, whoſe feet are waſhed by his majeſty, and he himſelf ſerves up the diſhes; they are afterwards preſented, in the King's name, with money, bread, and cloaths.---The king of Spain performs this ceremony in his antichamber, after having performed his devotions at chapel; and after the ſervice is over an entertainment follows for the accommodation of many poor. Cloathing is likewiſe diſtributed, and then the chief almoner pronounces a bleſſing *.

Of Bowing *at the Name of* Jesus.

This cuſtom appears to have had its riſe about the ſeventh century. The church of Rome probably borrowed is from the Pagans or Mahomedans; the former indeed not only bowed their body, but fell down poſtrate, or upon their knees, before their idols. The latter more nearly reſemble this cuſtom; for when an *Iman* pronounces the name of *Mahomed*, the Turks bow down their heads to expreſs the vene-

* Aimon of Ceremonies, cited by Picart, vol. II. page 21, 22.

ration

ration they have for the founder of their religion. From those authorities, Monsieur Picart says, as for bowing the body, or only the head, it hath ever been practised in religious worship, as being a natural demonstration of the respect which we owe to the Almighty, but do not attempt to assign any reason why the custom of bowing at the name of Jesus was introduced, and not at the mention of the name of God, or why it is to be most solemnly complied with in the recital of the creed *.

Of Burning Lamps *and* Wax Tapers *before the Shrines and Images of their Saints.*

No sooner do one enter their churches, than the eye is attracted by a number of lamps and wax-candles, which are constantly burning before the shrines and images of their saints. In all the great churches of Italy, says Mabillon, they hang up lamps at every altar. The primitive writers frequently expose the folly and absurdity of this heathenish custom; they light up candles to God, says Lactantius, as if he lived in the dark; and do not they deserve to pass for madmen, who offer lamps to the author and giver of light? But this is a piece of zeal which continues still the same in modern Rome, where each church abounds with lamps of massy silver, the gifts of princes and other persons of distinction; and it is surprising to see how great a number of this kind are perpetually kept burning before the altars of their principal saints or images, as St. Antony of Padua, or the lady of Loretta, as well as the vast profusion of wax-candles with which their churches are illuminated on every great festival, when the high altar,

* Picart's Dissertation on Religious Worship, vol. I. page 16. This practice was disavowed by the Waldenses in the eleventh century, and by the Lutherans, according to Brentius's Declaration, cited by Mr. Hickman, Apol. page 109.

covered

covered with gold and ſilver plate, diſpoſed in beautiful figures, and ſtuck full of wax-lights, looks more like the rich ſide-board of ſome great Prince, than an altar to pay divine worſhip at.

Of Votive *Offerings.*

There is another thing almoſt equally remarkable as the number of lamps and wax-lights, viz. the number of offerings, or votive gifts, which hang round their altars in conſequence of vows made in time of danger, and in gratitude for deliverance, and cures wrought in ſickneſs or diſtreſs; a practice ſo common among the Heathens, that no one cuſtom of antiquity is ſo frequently mentioned by all their writers; a piece of ſuperſtition ſo beneficial to the prieſthood, that it could not fail of being taken into the ſcheme of the Romiſh church, where it reigns to this day in ſo groſs a manner as to give ſcandal and offence even to ſome of their own communion; there being ſo great a number of them hanging up in their churches, that, inſtead of adding beauty, they really hinder us from obſerving the ſight of more beautiful ornamented parts. Theſe offerings are ſometimes little figures in wood or wax, but eſpecially pieces of board painted; ſometimes indeed fine pictures, deſcribing the manner of the deliverance obtained by the miraculous interpoſition of the ſaint invoked; ſo that one of them ſaid, it might reaſonably be queſtioned whether we imitate the religion or the ſuperſtition of our anceſtors*.

Of Incense.

In ſome of the principal churches of Rome, where you have before you in one view a great number of altars, and all of them ſmoaking at once with ſtreams of incenſe, that one would imagine one's ſelf tranſported into the

* See Middleton's Letters from Rome, page 149.

temple of ſome Heathen deity. Under the Pagan emperors, the uſe of incenſe for any purpoſe of religion was thought ſo contrary to the obligations of chriſtianity, that in their perſecutions the very method of trying and convicting a Chriſtian was by requiring him only to throw ſome grains of it into the cenſor. Under the Chriſtian emperors it not only was looked upon as a rite ſo peculiarly heatheniſh, that the very places or houſes where it could be proved to have been done were by a law of Theodoſius confiſcated to the government; but at preſent, in the church of Rome, there is always a boy in a ſurplice waiting on the prieſt at the altar, with the ſacred utenſils, and among the reſt with a veſſel of incenſe, with many ſtrange motions, croſſings, &c. as it is ſmoaking around and over the altar *.

Of Holy Water.

Sprinkling Holy Water by the prieſt on ſolemn days, and uſed likewiſe by every one going in or out of a church, by dipping a finger in a baſon or veſſel for that purpoſe, and therewith croſſing himſelf; is a cuſtom borrowed from the Heathens. Platina, in his hiſtory of the Popes, aſcribes the inſtitution of this Holy Water to Alexander the Firſt; but that does not appear true, becauſe we find the primitive Fathers ſpeaking of it as a cuſtom purely heatheniſh, and condemning it as impious and deteſtable. Juſtin Martyr ſays, it was invented by dæmons. However, the Roman Catholic church adopt the uſe of holy water, on pretence of ſecuring mankind againſt the deluſions of the devil, and many of their learned writers reckon up ſeveral virtues and benefits derived from the uſe of it, both to the ſoul and the body, and to aſſert the atteſtation of the ſame by miracles. This holy water is nothing more than a mixture of ſalt, with common

* Middleton's Letters from Rome, p. 135.

water,

water, and bleſſing it by the prieſt. Middleton's letters from Rome, p. 136, & ſeq. Where he likewiſe quotes his authorities.

Of the CANONIZATION *of Saints.*

As to the proof of miracles, which is eſſential to theſe canonizations, every one will conceive how eaſy it muſt be in a function contrived to ſerve the intereſt of the church, and the ambition of its rulers, to procure ſuch a teſtimonial of them as will be ſufficient for the purpoſe.

In the college of St. Omer's, ſays Dr. Middleton, the father who ſhewed us the houſe produced ſome relicks of Thomas Becket, who is worſhipped as a great ſaint in that church; and notwithſtanding he was a prelate of a moſt daring, turbulent, ſeditious ſpirit, ambitious and inſolent, and guilty of the higheſt ingratitude to the King, traiterouſly endeavouring to excite the King of France and the court of Flanders to enter into a war with his King and country, and when he was cited by the King and Barons to anſwer for his mal-adminiſtrations, he abſolutely refuſed to appear, declaring himſelf reſponſible to none but God and the Pope; yet this man is now adored as one of the principal ſaints and martyrs of the Romiſh church, whoſe character, he ſays, he had choſen to give, as an illuſtrious example from our own hiſtory, what kind of merit it is that has exalted ſo many others in the ſame church to the ſame honours; and he challenges Catholics to tell what opinion their church entertains of Garnet the jeſuit, who was privy to the gun-powder plot, and ſuffered for his treaſon; and he muſt ſay they declare him to be a ſaint, and martyr of Chriſt, for ſuch he is held to be at Rome and St. Omer's *.

* Dr. Middleton's Prefatory Diſcourſe, p. 75.

This author adds, that the canonization of saints is become as common almost as the creation of cardinals, there having seldom been a Pope who did not add some to the calendar. Benedict XIII. canonized eight in one summer, Clement XII. four, and there is seldom any pretence wanting for supplying fresh saints, when it gratifies the ambition of the Pope, or other Princes of that communion, or some of their name and family.

Of Processions *made to St. Peter's Church in the Time of Lent.*

It was a remarkable part of the Heathen superstition, that, on some particular days, they had processions in honour of the God whose festival they were celebrating, wherein they were attended by priests in surplices, with wax-candles in their hands, carrying upon a pageant the images of their Gods; according to the account of *Apuleius* and others.

Monsieur *Tournefort*, in his travels through Greece, reflects upon the Greek church for having retained in their worship many of the rites of heathenism: But the reflection was full as applicable to his own as to the Greek church, in the very instance of carrying about the pictures of their saints, as the Pagans did those of their Gods.

Thus, says our author Dr. Middleton, in one of those processions lately made to St. Peter's in the time of Lent, I saw that ridiculous penance of the flagellantes, or self-whippers, who march with whips in their hands, and lash themselves on the bare back till they bled, in the same manner as the fanatical priests of Bellona used to cut and slash themselves of old, in order to please that Goddess.

And in the Romish church they have another exercise of the same kind, and in the season of Lent; for, on a certain day appointed annually for this discipline,

cipline, men of all conditions aſſemble themſelves towards the evening in one of the churches of the city, where whips or laſhes made of cords are diſtributed to every perſon preſent; and after they are all ſerved, and a ſhort office of devotion performed, the candles being put out upon the warning of a little bell, the whole company begin preſently to ſtrip themſelves, and exerciſe their whips on their own backs for about an hour, till, ſatiated with being their ſelf-tormentors, they put on their cloaths, and at the tinkling of a little bell they appear again in their proper dreſs *.

Of the BENEDICTION *of the Pontifical Robes.*

This benediction cannot be performed but by a Biſhop, unleſs he directs that a prieſt ſhould officiate in his ſtead; but whoever performs it muſt be dreſſed in a ſurplice with the ſtole over it, of a colour ſuitable to the day. The benediction differs in no reſpect from any of the foregoing, and is given by the light of tapers with the ſprinkling of holy water and a few prayers, which may be ſeen in the ritual; all the robes from the mitre down to the ſandals receive the ſame benediction.

Of the BENEDICTION *of thoſe who are appointed for the Holy War.*

When the biſhop bleſſes the new warrior, he gives him a ſword, bleſſed before by his lordſhip by the ſprinkling of the holy water. In giving him the ſword, he exhorts him to employ it againſt the enemies of the church, and true religion; then it is ſheathed, and the biſhop himſelf girds it upon him, the ſoldier all this time upon his knees, then gets up, draws it, flouriſhes it twice in the air, and brings it over his left

* Dr. Middleton's Letters from Rome, p. 191.

arm; then the biſhop takes the ſword, and gives him three gentle blows, and then gives him the kiſs of peace, and a ſecond time gives him his benediction, and then the perſon kiſſes his lordſhip's hand, and goes home in peace.

Of the Benediction *of* Images.

It was prohibited by the decrees of the council of Trent, to erect any extraordinary and unuſual images in churches, without the biſhop's licence and approbation firſt had and obtained; and they proceed to the benediction or conſecration of an image, in the ſame manner as to that of a new croſs; while the prayer is ſaying, the ſaint whom the image repreſents is named, and after that the ſprinkler is taken, and the prieſt to conclude the conſecration ſprinkles the image with holy water; but when any image of the Virgin Mary is bleſſed, it is incenſed three times as well as ſprinkled, to which are added an *Ave Maria*, ſome pſalms and anthems, the prayer beginning *Deus qui Virginitatem aulam, &c.* The anthem, *O glorioſa Dei Genetrix*, the magnificat, &c. A double ſign of the croſs, made with the prieſt's right hand, concludes the ceremony *. See the conſecration of public and private croſſes, p. 229.

The Benediction *of Bells.*

The ceremony of bleſſing bells, is by the Catholics called chriſtening of them, becauſe the name of ſome of the ſaints is aſcribed to them †, by virtue of whoſe invocation they are preſented, in order that they may obtain his favour and protection. The benediction devotes them to God's ſervice, that he may confer on them the power not barely of ſtriking the ear, but of touching the heart, by the influence of the Holy Ghoſt;

* Picart's Ceremonies, vol. I. p. 355, who quotes Piſcara Praxis Cer. lib. ii. ſect. 12. chap. iii.

† Pope John XIII. firſt baptiſed Bells, cent x.

when

when they are thus bleſſed and rung out, they contribute very much towards the prieſt's ſucceſs in his exorciſms, &c. It is the biſhop's peculiar province to perform this ceremony. For the method of caſting, of conſecration, perfuming, with other ceremonies, we refer the reader to Picart's edition of their ceremonies, vol. I. p. 353.

Leſt we ſhould be thought too tedious in this part of our hiſtory, we have purpoſely omitted, or but ſlightly treated of ſeveral of the diſtinguiſhing doctrines, practices, and ceremonies, of the church of Rome, as the celibacy of the clergy, the diſtinction between mortal and venial ſins, auricular confeſſions, the feaſts and feſtivals, according to the Roman calendar, excommunications on Holy Thurſday, the cuſtom of wearing relicks, as a part of the table-cloth (as it is pretended) that was laid when our Lord inſtituted his laſt ſupper, or part of the napkin with which he wiped his diſciples feet, as a remedy againſt divers diſeaſes.

The ceremonies of the Pope's coronation, the lent ſtations, ſtrewing of aſhes, carnival lent, ember week, Paſſion-week, Palm Sunday, &c. of uncovering the chalice at the altar, of the proceſſion of the hoſt to the grave, adoration of our Saviour's ſhroud.

The conſecration of the altar, of the oil and veſſels, bleſſing the new fire, the benediction of altar cloths and linen, the corporals and tabernacles, of the pix, ciberium, paten, and chalice, with other decorations of the altar, and a variety of other ceremonies, on which they lay no ſmall ſtreſs, and on which Proteſtants differ in their opinions and practice.

Hiſtory of the Greek *Church.*

THE Greek church may (at leaſt) for ſeveral centuries be conſidered as a part of the Roman church, having the ſame apoſtolical foundation (nay, the church of Jeruſalem was eſtabliſhed by the apoſtles much

† Allet's Ritual. Picart, p. 353.

earlier than that of Rome) and the biſhops maintained a reciprocal regard for and communion with each other, were united in ſome general councils, and held the unity of faith in the moſt important articles, notwithſtanding ſome difference in ſentiment; but it muſt be acknowledged, that, as early as the ſecond century, they were divided as to the time (and the obligation) of celebrating Eaſter. They likewiſe adhered pretty much to the doctrine of *Arius*, acknowledged the ſupremacy of the Father to the Son; and as it was the cuſtom of many of the biſhops to draw up a creed for his own church, moſt of their articles were conformable to the canons and creed called the apoſtles, which in ſubſtance is of the greateſt antiquity; and did alſo admit of the Nicene creed, drawn up A. D. 318: but in proceſs of time the Nicene creed was new-modelled by the general council of Conſtantinople, A. D. 381, when that part of it relating to the conſubſtantiality of the Son with the Father was rejected by them, and from this time we find ſome unchriſtian animoſity ſubſiſted between the eaſtern and weſtern churches, each cenſuring and anathematizing each other. Many points merely ſpeculative diſtracted and divided the churches, pelagianiſm, and the authority of particular councils, &c. and theſe not only continued, but increaſed to the ſixth century; councils convened in the eaſt, in oppoſition to thoſe in the weſt; the remarkable diſputes (before mentioned) called the three chapters, and about the corruptibility or uncorruptibility of the body of Jeſus Chriſt, and whether we may or ought to ſay that one of the *Trinity* ſuffered, upon which many of the eaſtern churches ſeparated in their communion from the church of Rome; and it is certain the Greek church made ſome good regulations.

In the ſeventh century they convened a council, which fixed the diſcipline of the Greek church, made 102 canons, or eccleſiaſtical laws, although they were never

never received in the weſt, approving the canonical letters of St. Baſil, appointed the myſteries of the ſacrament to be received faſting; they gave the ſacrament in both kinds; mixed water with wine; forbad the eating cheeſe or eggs in Lent, that there ſhould be no faſting on Saturdays, and prohibited the eating of blood.

Other matters of diſpute contributed to widen their difference; and in the ninth century there was a conteſt between the Pope of Rome, and the Patriarch of Conſtantinople, about Bulgaria. The Pope's legates affirmed it belonged to the Pope, and that the Bulgarians ought to ſubmit themſelves to the church of Rome. The eaſtern patriarchs aſſerted, that Bulgaria having been taken from the Greeks, and formerly governed by Greek biſhops, ought to be ſubject to the patriarch of Conſtantinople: the Emperor likewiſe favoured the patriarch's party, and a diviſion conſequently enſued, A. D. 878. The Greeks ſoon after preferred ten articles of accuſation againſt the Latins; the firſt was againſt the proceſſion of the Holy Ghoſt; the Greeks denying that the Holy Ghoſt proceeded from the Father and the Son, and aſſerted his proceeding from the Father only. They found fault with the Latins for not having eight weeks in their Lent, with the Latin prieſts ſhaving their beards, with their being obliged to celibacy, with their forbidding to anoint with the holy chriſm the foreheads of thoſe they baptiſed. They charged them with making biſhops of deacons, without firſt conferring on them the order of prieſt; they oppoſed the primacy of Rome, and would have preferred the Patriarchs of Conſtantinople, or at leaſt made them equal; they likewiſe charged the Latins with making the holy chriſm with river water, and with offering a lamb at Eaſter, together with the body and blood of Chriſt, after the manner of the Jews.

From

From this time we may with ſome propriety conſider the *Greek church* as diſtinct from the church of Rome, notwithſtanding ſo great an agreement as there ſubſiſts between the eaſtern and weſtern churches, both in their principles and practices, eſpecially as the conſtitution of the Greek church differs from that of Rome.

The Greek church, according to their original conſtitution, is governed by four patriarchs, viz. thoſe of Alexandria, of Jeruſalem, of Antioch, and of Conſtantinople; the latter of which aſſumes to himſelf the title of *Univerſal*, or *Oecumenical* Patriarch, on account of his reſiding in the imperial city, and having a larger juriſdiction than the reſt. This title was confirmed by a council convened in that capital in the year 518. This Patriarch likewiſe aſſumes the title of holineſs, in the abſtract; and Cyril Lucar, at the beginning of one of his letters, aſſumes the title of oecumenical judge of the Chriſtian churches dependant on the imperial throne of Conſtantinople *.

The Emperor of the Turks may indeed with truth be ſtiled the ſupreme head of the Greek church, as the Patriarch himſelf, the biſhops, &c. are obliged to procure his letters-patent before they can act in their reſpective functions.

The following is a SUMMARY *of the* BELIEF *and* PRACTICE *of the* GREEK CHURCH.

I. They believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, viſible and inviſible.

II. In one lord *Jeſus Chriſt*, the only begotten ſon of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of Gods, light of lights; very God of very God, begotten, not made, being one ſubſtance with the Father,

* See Sieur Aymon's authentic Memoirs.

by

by whom all things were made: who for us men, and for our ſalvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the *Holy Ghoſt* of the *Virgin Mary*, and was made man, and was crucified for us; alſo under Pontius Pilate; he ſuffered and was buried, (or deſcended into the grave) and the third day he roſe again according to the ſcriptures, and aſcended into heaven, and ſitteth at the right-hand of the Father; and he ſhall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead, of whoſe kingdom there ſhall be no end.

III. That the Holy Ghoſt proceeds only from the Father, not from the ſon; yet they believe him to be God.

IV. They do not acknowledge the Pope's ſupremacy, nor infallibility, nor conſequently that the church of Rome is the true mother-church; they even prefer their own to that of Rome, as the moſt apoſtolical; and on Holy Thurſday excommunicate the Pope, and all the Latin prelates, as heretics and ſchiſmatics.

V. They believe no other ſacraments than baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper. Baptiſm they perform, by dipping the perſon three times under water diſtinctly, at the name of the FATHER, the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. They uſe a kind of anointing, croſſing, &c. in baptiſm. They baptiſe infants, and have one godfather or godmother, according to the ſex of the child. But baptiſm is often deferred by them, till their children are five, ten, or fifteen years of age, or longer, and they rebaptiſe all the Latins who are admitted to their communion.

VI. That the Lord's ſupper ought to be adminſtered in both kinds, even to infants, before they can be capable of diſtinguiſhing the ſpiritual food from any other. The laity are indiſpenſibly obliged to receive the ſacrament in both kinds. They ſeal the bread in the euchariſt with the form of a croſs. Their bread is leavened. They receive both the bread and wine together in a ſpoon, from the hands of a prieſt, and always faſting. Whether they acknowledge tranſubſtantiation or not, which is diſputed, they pay a ſuperſtitious veneration

veneration to their conſecrated bread. They do not indeed carry it in proceſſion, but after the prieſt has conſecrated it, he elevates it, and ſays, *Thou art my God*; *thou art my King*, *I adore thee*; *Lord have mercy upon me*, *miſerable ſinner*, and in the whole of this ſervice are extremely ſuperſtitious.

VII. They exclude confeſſion, confirmation, extreme unction, and matrimony, from being ſacraments. Though they recommend a confeſſion four times a year; yet they deny that auricular confeſſion is a divine precept, and at beſt regard it only as an injunction of the church, and inſiſt that it ought always to be free and voluntary; but is in no wiſe neceſſary to make a full diſcovery of all their ſins, or of all the circumſtances attending them.

VIII. Confirmation is adminiſtered immediately after baptiſm. This has always been eſteemed by them a part of the prieſt's office, and is not deferred to be performed by a biſhop, in any of the Greek churches.

IX. Extreme unction, as uſed by the Papiſts, is practiſed in ſome degree; but they diſclaim that name, or calling it a ſacrament: the Greeks adminiſter it to all ſick perſons, and as often as a perſon in ſuch circumſtances might deſire it, without waiting till the perſon is at the point of death.

X. They maintain likewiſe, that matrimony is no ſacrament; but, on the contrary, an union that may be diſſolved, and that, in the caſe of adultery, or other provocations, it may be lawful to ſeparate. Their prieſts are equally approved, if married before the taking holy orders; but they don't indulge them in that reſpect afterwards. They think marriage a fourth time unlawful. They deny that fornication is a mortal ſin.

XI. Though they diſbelieve the notion of purgatory, they offer up prayers for the dead. The words of their office, tranſlated, run thus, "Grant, O Lord, that his ſoul may be at reſt, in thoſe manſions of light, conſolation

tion and repoſe, from whence all grief and ſorrow are for ever excluded."

XII. They are divided as to their ſentiments of hell, as of a different nature and duration. They, in general, favour the notion, that the torments of hell will not be eternal.

XIII. The Greeks, and all the eaſtern nations in general, are of opinion, that departed ſouls will not be immediately and perfectly happy; that the firſt Paradiſe will be a ſtate of repoſe, and the next of eternal felicity.

XIV. They enjoin the obſervation of diverſe faſts and feſtivals: they have four lents; the firſt begins on the fourteenth of November; the ſecond, the great lent before Eaſter; the third, the week after Pentecoſt; and the fourth, on the firſt of Auguſt. At theſe times they eat nothing that has blood, or oil, nor milk-meats, but herbs, and ſhell-fiſh, and are ſo extremely ſuperſtitious, that they ſcarce allow an egg or fleſh-broth to a ſick perſon. Yet they diſdain the Latins for their obſervations of the vigils before the nativity of Chriſt, and the feſtivals of the Virgin Mary and the apoſtles, as well as for their faſting in Ember-Week; they prohibit all faſting on Saturdays, except on the Saturday preceding Eaſter.

XV. They ſtrictly abſtain from eating ſuch things as have been ſtrangled, and ſuch other meats as are prohibited in the *Old Teſtament*.

XVI. They reject the religious uſe of graven images, and ſtatues, although they admit of pictures in their churches, and have a great veneration for them.

XVII. They worſhip angels, and pray to the Virgin Mary, pray and ſing hymns to the ſaints, and are very ſuperſtitious in the hiſtories of them.

XVIII. They attend prayers, morning and evening, and enjoin prayers for Kings, and all civil and eccleſiaſtical magiſtrates, and for the converſion of ſchiſmatics and heretics.

XIX. They

XIX. They enjoin obedience and honour to the prieſt.

XX. They forbid the laity to invade the rights and benefits of the clergy, and all kinds of ſacrilegious acts.

XXI. They forbid marrying in Lent, or on other faſts.

XXII. They prohibit the frequenting theatres, and other Gentile cuſtoms.

XXIII. They forbid the laity to read the books of heretics.

XXIV. Though they reject the Apocrypha, as being uncanonical; yet they hold ſome traditions of equal authority with the ſcripture; and greatly venerate the writings of Baſil, Chryſoſtom, Damaſcene, &c.

XXV. Of all the general councils that have been held in the Catholic church by the Popes at different times, they pay no regard to any after the ſixth; and reject the ſeventh, which was the ſecond held at Nice.

XXVI. Their excommunications are often made on very frivolous occaſions.

XXVII. They hold juſtification by faith and works conjointly.

XXVIII. They deny that the office of ſubdeacon is at preſent an holy order.

XXIX. They have a great number of monks, all of St. Baſil's order; theſe have their abbots. The patriarch, Metropolian, and biſhops, are of this order.

XXX. They have four liturgies or maſſes; St. James's, St. Chryſoſtom, St. Baſil's, (which they principally eſteem) and Gregory the Great, which laſt is uſed by the Latins, and they celebrate the maſs in the old Greek tongue *.

* Notwithſtanding from the preceeding articles it appears, that the conſtitution and doctrine of the Greek church is in ſome reſpects modelled more agreeable to ſcripture than the church of Rome; yet their extreme ſuperſtition in the obſervation of their Lents, in the performance of the ſacraments, their conſecrated places, veſtments, utenſils, and even the hollowed ground, ſhew they come very little behind the church of Rome in ſuperſtitious ceremonies.

The

The ARTICLES OF FAITH *of the* FRENCH *or* GALLICAN CHURCH *.

The French church, by acknowledging the Pope's ſupremacy, and by perſevering inflexibly in the principles, and (with very little exception) to the numerous train of ſuperſtitious ceremonies of that holy mother church, may be conſidered as one of her perfectly obedient ſons. It is true, the French nation ſoon perceived, that the Pope's claim was unlimited, and would affect not only the royal prerogative, but the liberty and property of his ſubjects; and therefore, in the eleventh century, the French King not only objected to, but refuſed compliance with ſome claims of the Pope relating to the right of conferring benefices. And though this diſpute, in the cloſe of the twelfth century, between Boniface VIII. and Philip I. King of France, produced ſome dreadful effects, the French never loſt ſight of their point, but aſſerted the King's prerogative to what what was called the regale; and in the fifteenth century, when the council of Trent had eſtabliſhed the authority of the Pope, in oppoſition to the prerogative of the King of France, he ordered his ambaſſadors to proteſt againſt it; and in the year 1680, when Pope Innocent XI. ſeemed determined to oppoſe his right, there was held a national council of the clergy to regulate this diſpute, who confirmed his right of the regale over all the churches of the kingdom. Yet ſoon after Lewis XIV. to diſcover his ſuperſtitious veneration of the Pope, and his bigotted attachment to the perſecuting ſpirit of popery, or in complaiſance to the Pope, repealed the edict of Nantz, and baniſhed his Proteſtant ſubjects, or treated them with cruel ſeverities.

* This term is very antient, for we find it in the council of Paris, held in the year 362; by it is underſtood the body of French Roman Catholics. See p. 118.

But

But notwithſtanding the acknowledged ſupremacy of the Pope in ſpirituals, the French church differs in ſome reſpects in its conſtitution, privileges, liberties, &c. for this church has all along preſerved certain antient rights, that ſhe has poſſeſſed almoſt time immemorial, neither are theſe privileges any grants of Popes, but certain franchiſes and immunities derived to her from her firſt original, and which ſhe has taken care never to relinquiſh.

The following articles point out wherein they conſiſt.

I. The King of France has a right to convene ſynods, or provincial and national councils.

II. The Pope's legates (*à latere*) are never admitted into France, unleſs with the approbation and allowance of the King.

III. The legate of Avignon cannot exerciſe his commiſſion in any of his Majeſty's dominions, till after he has obtained the King's leave for that purpoſe.

IV. The prelates of the Gallican church, being ſummoned by the Pope, cannot depart the realm upon any pretence whatſoever, without the King's permiſſion.

V. The Pope has no authority to levy any tax or impoſition upon the eccleſiaſtical preferments, upon any pretence either of loan, vacancy, annates, tythes, procurations, or otherwiſe, without the King's order, and the conſent of the clergy.

VI. The Pope has no authority to depoſe the King, or grant away his dominions to any perſon whomſoever. His holineſs can neither excommunicate the King, nor abſolve any of his ſubjects from their allegiance.

VII. The Pope likewiſe has no authority to excommunicate the King's officers, for the executing and diſcharging their reſpective offices and functions.

VIII. The Pope has no right to take cognizance, either by himſelf or his delegates, of any pre-eminences, or privileges, belonging to the crown of France, the King

King being not obliged to argue his prerogatives in any court but his own.

IX. Counts Palatine made by the Pope, are not acknowledged as ſuch in France.

X. The Pope cannot grant licences to churchmen, the King's ſubjects, to bequeathe the iſſue of their reſpective preferments, contrary to the laws of the King, and cuſtoms of the realm.

XI. The Pope cannot grant a diſpenſation to enjoy any eſtate, or revenues in France, without the King's conſent.

XII. The Pope cannot grant a licence to eccleſiaſtics, to alienate church-lands, ſituate and lying in France, without the King's conſent.

XIII. The King may puniſh his eccleſiaſtical officers for miſbehaviour in their reſpective charges, notwithſtanding the privilege of their orders.

XIV. No perſon has any right to hold any benefice in France, unleſs he be a native, or is naturalized by the King, or has a diſpenſation for that purpoſe.

XV. The Pope is not ſuperior to an œcumenical, or general council.

XVI. The Gallican church does not receive, without any diſtinction, all the canons, and all the decretal epiſtles, but keeps to that antient collection, called *Corpus Canonicum*, which Pope Adrian ſent to *Charlemagne*, towards the end of the eighth century, under the pontificate of Nicholas I. the French biſhops likewiſe declaring it to be the only canon law, wherein their liberty conſiſts.

XVII. The Pope has no power to diſpenſe with the law of God, the law of Nature, or theſe antient canons.

XVIII. The regulations of the Apoſtolic chamber, or court, are not obligatory on the Gallican church, unleſs confirmed by the King's edicts.

XIX. If a Frenchman makes application for a benefice, lying in France, his holineſs is obliged to give

him an inſtrument, under the ſeal of his office; and, in caſe of refuſal, the parliament of Paris can give orders to the biſhop of that dioceſe to give him inſtitution; which inſtitution will be of equal validity with the Pope's.

XX. It is only by ſufferance that the Pope has what they call a right of collating to benefices in France.

Theſe liberties are eſteemed inviolable, and the French Kings, at their coronation, ſolemnly ſwear to preſerve and maintain them.

As the Gallican church, with reſpect to the authority of the civil power, is exempt from that abſolute ſubjection to the Pope of Rome, which other nations in Europe are under to him, it is no wonder if their government, in church as well as ſtate, ſomewhat differ; ſo that we find the cruelties of the inquiſition has not yet had any footing in France; though it muſt be owned the French have given too many proofs of a ſimilar deportment to the mother-church, by many inſtances of cruel perſecutions for conſcience ſake, as well by ſuppreſſing the liberty of free enquiry in matters of religion, as by the many ſuperſtitious rites and ceremonies of her worſhip. It ſhews it is no other than Rome papal. The maſs is ſolemnized with all the magnificence and ceremony as at Rome, and attendance of perſons of all ranks enjoined under various penalties; the confeſſion to prieſts acknowledged of neceſſity to ſalvation; the proceſſion of the hoſt through the ſtreets of Paris is attended with great formality, and at its approach foreigners as well as natives are required to pay a ſuperſtitious reſpect to it, &c. *

* Broughton's Dictionary.

Of

CHAP. III.

Of the State of KNOWLEDGE *and* RELIGION *in* BRITAIN, *more particularly from the firſt Propagation, and conſequent* ESTABLISHMENT *of* CHRISTIANITY, *to the Commencement of the Reign of* WILLIAM *the* CONQUEROR, 1066.

WE ſhall now take a retroſpective view of thoſe dark and babarous ages of the world, when paganiſm and the groſſeſt idolatry had overſpread theſe iſles, and ſuccinctly point out ſome remarkable occurrences and circumſtances that intervened, and at length made way for the introduction and prevalence of Chriſtianity, though for a long time after incumbered with a variety of Romiſh ſuperſtitions.

The antient inhabitants of Britain, not only at firſt ſettling here, but for a conſiderable time, were in a ſtate of ignorance and barbarity; nor indeed could it from the nature of things be otherwiſe, unleſs countries ſhould happen to be peopled by large colonies from ſocieties that have already arrived to a conſiderable proficiency of knowledge and government, which could not poſſibly be the caſe in early periods. The perſons who originally ſettled in theſe remote parts of Europe, being rude and unpoliſhed themſelves, were able to carry nothing along with them but their own ſavage manners, and their own groſs conceptions.

The firſt inhabitants of an uncultivated region generally apply themſelves to ſuch employments and exerciſes as the want of proviſion may urge them to; probably to hunting as the moſt ſpeedy means of ſubſiſtence; the next ſtage is paſturage, and a third agriculture; the laſt ſtep is regulated governments: all theſe

muſt, as it were, make way for the introduction of knowledge, the trueſt ſource of religion.

Though England might be peopled ſeveral centuries before the firſt accounts we have of it, yet the barbarous condition in which we perceive it to have been, is no more than might reaſonably be expected. At the time when Cæſar invaded the iſland, even huſbandry itſelf does not ſeem to have been univerſally followed: our anceſtors however do not appear to have been without ſome ſkill in war; for tho' in this reſpect they were greatly inferior to the Romans, yet they conducted their oppoſition to Cæſar in a manner that redounds highly to their credit, conſidering the amazing abilities of that general, and the excellent diſcipline of his army. Ambition and reſentment ſeemed at this time to have gained the aſcendancy of their reaſon and humanity; that they had brought the wretched arts of mutual deſtruction much ſooner to perfection than thoſe which refine the ſoul, and are cultivated to adorn, improve, and bleſs ſociety. To rectify this great diſorder and unhappineſs, ſome perſons were pretty early diſtinguiſhed, by a ſuperior penetration into the difference of principles and actions, whoſe diſpoſitions likewiſe led them to compaſſionate the unhappy ſtate of mankind at that time, ſo far ſunk in ignorance and barbariſm. Some of the firſt thus diſtinguiſhed and employed, famous in hiſtory, were the *Druids* *.

Hiſtory of the Druids.

The DRUIDS, according to the general hiſtory of them, we are apt to look upon as perſons of very extraordinary accompliſhments. This deception has been aſſiſted by our poets, who have ſpread a glory round them, and have painted them in a manner that diſpoſes us to regard them as almoſt divine. No one has more charmingly contributed to carry on the deluſion than the ingenious and elegant Maſon, in his Caractacus. But if we re-

* Rapin's Hiſt. tranſlated by Lidiard, Introd. p. 10.

duce

duce our ideas to the teſt of ſober reaſon, we ſhall not find much in the Druids that was particularly excellent and valuable. They were the prieſts of the time, and, like other prieſts, had addreſs and ſubtility enough to acquire a vaſt authority, and to keep the people in abſolute ſubjection. They were likewiſe magiſtrates as well as prieſts, and had the determination of civil cauſes; a circumſtance which was the natural effect, both of their ſuperior quality, and ſuperior knowledge; for what knowledge then prevailed, was principally confined to them. However, the remains we have of the Druids do not give us a very high opinion of the progreſs they had made, though undoubtedly they went far beyond the reſt of their countrymen, and it is probable that individuals among them might be men of great wiſdom.

They entertained the notion of tranſmigration; a notion which has ſpread from the fartheſt eaſt to the remoteſt weſt, and which has been ſo widely embraced, that a philoſophical perſon cannot help looking on this fact as a ſingular phænomenon in the hiſtory of human nature, and imagine that either there is ſomething in it very natural to the unenlightened mind of man, or that it proceeded from an antient and general tradition. The beſt principles advanced by the Druids were, that the Deity is one, and infinite, and that his worſhip ought not to be confined within walls; that all things derive their origin from heaven; that the ſoul is immortal; and that children ſhould be educated with the utmoſt care. But their prodigious veneration for the miſletoe, and the great effects they attributed to it, their opinion that the moon is a ſovereign remedy for diſeaſes, with others of their ſentiments and cuſtoms, ſhewed a ſtrong ſuperſtition; as their prohibiting an intercourſe with ſtrangers, if not merely a political law, teſtified a ſavageneſs of manners; and their allowance, nay, command, of human ſacrifices carries in it the evidence of the moſt

ſhocking cruelty. In truth, they were little more than the barbarous prieſts of a barbarous and unlettered people. Their knowledge is ſaid to have reached to phyſics, to the mathematics, to aſtronomy, and to medicine; but as it was never committed to writing, it could not be very extenſive: indeed it chiefly conſiſted of the arcana of their doctrines and worſhip, and had a ſpecial relation to magic. Whatever their wiſdom was, if we may give credit to the teſtimony of Cæſar, it was found here in greater perfection than in Gaul; from whence children were ſent into Britain, to be inſtructed in the diſcipline of the Druids. The ſame author informs us, that it had its original in this country; but that is a circumſtance much diſputed.

There were likewiſe prieſts of an inferior order, called Bards, whoſe principal buſineſs was to celebrate the praiſes of the gods and departed heroes, in odes and verſes, and to ſing them to their harps, at their religious aſſemblies, public feſtivals, and private entertainments. Theſe men were, in fact, the heralds, the chronologers, and the hiſtorians, as well as the poets of the land, for they kept up the memory of illuſtrious tranſactions; and by their compoſitions, which tradition handed down to poſterity, they tranſmitted from age to age the names and characters of patriots and warriors *.

The divine *Homer* himſelf can be conſidered as no other than one of them, whoſe conſummate excellency, and a number of circumſtances, contributed to preſerve his works from oblivion, and to raiſe him to the higheſt ſeat in the temple of Fame. Bards have been found in many countries, and continued in Scotland and Ireland nearly to our own time. As to the antient Britiſh ones, we have few remains of their productions; but we may venture to aſſert that many of them were truly valuable.

* Abſtract from the Library, p. 73.

There

There was another order of perſons called *Eubates*, who applied themſelves to the contemplation of the works of nature, and the ſtudy of philoſophy. What progreſs they then made, we have very little account of; but they rather ſeem to have had ſome wild notions in aſtrology, than any proper principles of philoſophical knowledge, that might have improved their minds in the right knowledge of God, and the true principles of religion.

Such was the general ſtate of things, till the iſland came under the dominion of the Cæſars, which may be conſidered as a new epocha in the hiſtory of the knowledge of antient Britain.

Roman Empire united in Theodoſius, A. D. 387.

Whoever has a ſtrong regard to the cauſe of freedom, can ſcarce avoid being filled with indignation, when he beholds the Romans ſpreading deſolation and ſlaughter around them; wantonly ſubduing the nations of the earth, and unjuſtly depriving them of their liberty. But all this time, wherever they conquered, they were for poliſhing and reforming the manners of the inhabitants, and diffuſing the knowledge of arts and ſciences; though it muſt be owned, that, during the warm conteſts which ſubſiſted between the Romans and the Britons, when the latter ſo glorioufly, ſo bravely, though ſo unſucceſſively, ſtruggled to maintain their independence, little progreſs could be made in literature: but when the country was peaceably ſettled into provinces, then civility began to ſpread itſelf, and knowledge more generally diffuſed, inſomuch that many of the Britiſh nobles ſtudied the Roman learning, and valued themſelves on their magnificence and politeneſs, becoming pleaſed with what was in fact the badges of their ſlavery.

During this time there were, no doubt, ſchools of philoſophy, and ſeveral eminent men; but who were moſt celebrated, or what ſciences were moſt cultivated, we are not able to ſay, no traces of them being now

to be found. The confuſion that ſucceeded deſtroyed all the remains of learning, and left a blank in this period which cannot be filled up.

A. D. 314. But there is one event belonging to this æra, which, beſides its own immenſe importance in other views, comes more immediately under my notice, viz. the propagation of chriſtianity in theſe iſles. It is not neceſſary to inquire who was the perſon by whom the religion of Jeſus was firſt preached, or the exact time when it was introduced: ſuppoſing we reject all conjectures of its being promulged by the apoſtles, or their immediate diſciples, it is probable that it was very ſoon communicated to the Britons. It might be gaining ground, and ſpread greatly, before it received a civil eſtabliſhment, as we are informed of many martyrs who witneſſed to the truth, under the perſecution raiſed by the Emperor Dioclefian, of whom St. Albian is reckoned the protomartyr of North Britain; and from the days of Conſtantine the goſpel would no doubt be much diffuſed, and generally embraced: accordingly we are aſſured, that three Britiſh biſhops aſſiſted at the council of Arles, A. D. 314. and ſubſcribed the acts of that council. We read alſo that ſome of them were preſent at the council of Aminium in 359 *."

359.

Now, ſo illuſtrious an event as the propagation of chriſtianity in this country, could not take place without bringing along with it a mighty change in the ſtate of knowledge; all thoſe who embraced our holy religion were turned from groſs idolatry and abſurd ſuperſtition, to the belief and worſhip of one God. The reception of it was a vaſt acquiſition of wiſdom, as it contributed in many reſpects to expand the mind, and ſoften the manners of our anceſtors; it would not in thoſe ſimple times, when human reaſon was more imperfect than it now is, produce ſuch noble and extended views of

* The Library, p. 75.
The Hiſtory of the Church of Great Britain, p. 6.

things

things as we can at preſent attain, eſpecially conſidering how ſoon errors and ſuperſtitions began to be mixed with the goſpel; nevertheleſs it had not then been corrupted ſo much as it hereafter was, and during the purer ages it might greatly promote juſt and rational ſentiments in general *.

What the particular ſtate of religion was, it is difficult to aſcertain; but we find doctrinal diſputes agitated men in thoſe days, as well as in ſucceeding periods. The notions of Arius are ſaid to have been embraced in this country, and it is an undoubted fact, that Pelagianiſm was very prevalent. It was ſo prevalent as to occaſion ſharp controverſies, and ſome biſhops were ſent over from Gaul to recover the Britons to the oppoſite opinions, though without any laſting ſucceſs.

From about this time, when the Romans leave Britain, there aroſe a confuſed ſucceſſion of Britiſh Kings, or rather petty tyrants, for twenty years †, till the year 445, when Vortigern is choſen King. He was originally chieftain of the Silures, ſettled in Radnorſhire, and had acquired ſome reputation by his warlike atchievements againſt the enemies of his country; tho' his martial genius by no means appeared at this juncture, when, inſtead of exerting the natural ſtrength of the kingdom, which, if properly applied, would have been ſufficient to ſecure it from the deſigns of the enemy, he placed his dependance upon foreign auxiliaries. By his weakneſs or knavery he betrayed his country into the hands of the Saxons, who had for a century and a half infeſted the coaſt of Britain to ſuch a degree, that the Roman Emperors, from the reign of Dioclefian, maintained a conſiderable military force under the count of the Saxon ſhore, on purpoſe to ſe-

424

445

* Abſtract from the Library, p. 76.

† Blair.

cure

cure this island against the descents of those piratical adventurers†.

Vortigern, not a little agitated by his fears,
447 which were the more predominant from a consciousness of his demerit, employed his emissaries to alarm the nobility with the exaggerated accounts of the strength, destination, and malevolence of their old enemies the Scots and Picts. Having thus artfully prepared their minds for the proposal, he summoned them to a general council, on pretence of deliberating on the necessity of the state, and there managed their passions with such dexterity, that they invested him with full power to invite the Saxons into England, and assign to them the isle of Thanet for their habitation.

The Saxons did not long remain inactive: Vor-
452 tigern being pressed by his enemies from the north, they marched against the Scots and Picts, who had advanced as far as Stamford in Lincolnshire, when a battle ensued, in which the Saxons and Britons obtained a complete victory; after which the Saxons returned to the place of their destination, where they were supplied with food and raiment at the expence of Vortigern, who would have had no cause perhaps to repent of their arrival, which were only about 1500; but their own country being populous, and withal so barren, and the fertile lands of Britain so agreeable and alluring, that, in a very little time, they were reinforced with 5000 men, formed the ambitious view of becoming sole masters of England, and industriously sought an occasion of quarrel, and, after some struggles for victory, the last of which was an incur-
477 sion of the Saxons under Hengist and Esca, the Britons were defeated, and became the subjects of the Saxons. This was an event not only prejudicial in general to the liberties and properties of Britain, but to science and religion in particular. Vortigern was

† Smollet, p. 121.
Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. I. p. 61.

by

by this time become a contemptible partiſan of the Saxons, and ſo immerſed in vice and debauchery, that St. Germanus, deputy of the Gallican church in Britain, reprimanded him for his diſſolute life; that he was anathematiſed in a council of the Britiſh clergy, and his ſubjects diſcharged of their allegiance.

And whatever the ſtate of knowledge might be in this iſland before the introduction of the Saxons, it certainly received a great change for the worſe at that period. The repeated invaſions of thoſe barbarians, the wars they raiſed, and the deſolations they occaſioned, ſpread a general confuſion, diſperſed the Britons to the remoteſt parts of the country, deſtroyed the monuments of learning, and left no room for the improvement and cultivation of the mind.

The few literary records we have, relate only to ſuch perſons as lived where the Saxons did not reach. The ſchools founded by Dubricius and Iltutus in North Wales, produced ſeveral men whoſe names have been tranſmitted with honour to poſterity; though in fact we are but little acquainted with their real attainments. Among theſe were Patrick and David, who exerted themſelves much in preaching the goſpel, and whom the ſuperſtition of latter ages hath advanced into tutelary ſaints, the firſt of Ireland, and the ſecond of Wales. The monaſtery of Bangor was particularly famous for the education of youth. A number of ſcholars were brought up in it, who made ſome figure in their days; and among the reſt Gildas, who wrote a treatiſe upon the deſtruction of Britain, and from whom we principally derive our information concerning the ſtate of things during the latter end of the fifth, and part of the ſixth century.

Hiſtory of the Saxons, and K. Ethelbert's converſion.

To the Saxons let us now direct our view, and, with reſpect to knowledge, we ſhall find them in a diſmal ſituation. They were in the loweſt condition of ignorance, rudeneſs, and barbarity; their religious worſhip conſiſted of the groſſeſt

groſſeſt idolatry, and they ſacrificed priſoners of war to the Gods. The firſt circumſtance of any note among them, was, the reception of the goſpel by Ethelbert, the King of Kent, and his ſubjects. His Queen Bertha, who was daughter or niece to Chilperic, King of Paris, and a Chriſtian, had, together with Lindhard, a biſhop, as it is ſaid, of piety and learning, who attended her from France, prepared the way for this great event, by converting ſeveral perſons, and by producing a favourable diſpoſition in the mind of her huſband. But the grand work was carried on by Auſtin, and other monks, ſent by Pope Gregory from Rome. One thing in this affair deſerves to be taken notice of, which is, that Ethelbert, whether it was owing to the good impreſſions of his lady, or the natural dictates of reaſon working in his own rude, but unprejudiced underſtanding, allowed to his people the utmoſt liberty of conſcience. He treated the miſſionaries with reſpect, heard them with attention, and permitted them to propagate their doctrines without interruption; both before and after he had embraced chriſtianity, he left his ſubjects to an entire freedom of judging and acting for themſelves. His converſion, however, was followed by that of the whole nation; a fact the leſs to be wondered at, when we conſider that the barbarians, having no ſettled ſentiments, are in general ready to receive any which are offered by ſuch as excel them in knowledge, and eſpecially when encouraged by their own prince. This is confirmed by a variety of inſtances in the hiſtory of the world; for we ſhall almoſt always find, that the ignorant and upoliſhed conquerors of a civilized country ſubmitted, without much heſitation, to the religion of the people they had ſubdued.

As to the change that was produced by Auſtin and his attendants in the principles and manners of the Saxons, it was not, to ſpeak the moſt favourably of it, by any means ſo happy an alteration as would have been

been brought about, had the goſpel been preached in purer ages. The truth at that age was mixed with ſo much error and ſuperſtition, that the underſtanding of our anceſtors could not be ſo greatly enlarged, by the reception of chriſtianity, as at firſt we might be apt to ſuppoſe; for, however upright the intentions of Auſtin might be, it is evident by many inſtances that he was a very weak man.

Auſtin, otherwiſe called Auguſtin, arrived in England in the year 591 as a ſimple monk and miſſionary; ſoon after which he was honoured with the Pope's pall, and created biſhop of Canterbury. In this character he obtained no ſmall influence over Ethelbert, and was the inſtrument of his converſion to chriſtianity. He very ſoon after aſſumed the pomp and authority of a patriarchal metropolian, or apoſtle of the Engliſh nation. He was indeed conſecrated as ſuch at Arles, to which he made a voyage for that purpoſe; and at his return to Britain he ſent Laurentius, with a monk called Peter, to make the Pope acquainted with the ſucceſs of his labours, and deſire his opinion and direction touching certain points relating to the behaviour of the biſhops and clergy. His holineſs having conſidered and replied to the queſtions, which with their anſwers may be ſeen in Bede's hiſtory of the church, ſent over Melitus, Paulus, Juſtus, Melinus, and Ruſinianus, to aſſiſt him in converting the Saxons; at the ſame time he tranſmitted directions about erecting ſees among the new convents, with a pall for Auguſtin, which is an undyed piece of woollen cloth, laid upon St. Peter's tomb by the Pope's own hand, and worn over the ſhoulders by the metropolitans when they officiate. Auguſtin was likewiſe permitted by his maſter to convert the Pagan temples into Chriſtian churches, after due purification, and to inſtitute anniverſary feſtivals of ſaints and conſecrations, upon which the good people ſhould build booths around thoſe places of worſhip, kill oxen, eat, drink, and be merry,

with

with moderation. A very ſingular indulgence, judiciouſly granted to the Engliſh, who were uſed to good cheer, and would not have at firſt reliſhed the practice of faſting and other mortifications.

Some have aſſerted, that Auſtin and ſome others, with more probability than Paulinus, baptiſed ten thouſand in one day. To which ſoever of them this fact is attributed, it is probable that theſe numerous converſions were too much like thoſe ſince carried on by popiſh miſſionaries, and conſiſted more in a change of outward profeſſion, than any real alteration of ſentiments, diſpoſitions, and manners. This is farther apparent from the Saxons being allowed to retain many of their Pagan cuſtoms and rites of worſhip, provided they applied them to other objects; a permiſſion which, though calculated to anſwer political purpoſes, was directly contrary to the practice of the apoſtles, and in its very nature deſtructive to the progreſs of true religion.

As for Ethelbert, he was become ſo zealous a convert, that he bequeathed his own palace to the church, and retired to Reculver, that Auguſtin might be more at his eaſe at Canterbury. Notwithſtanding all theſe favours, and the princely magnificence in which he lived, this pious apoſtle could enjoy no content while the Britiſh clergy lived independent of his authority, and unſubjected to the ſee of Rome.

Independent, therefore, of the deſire which Auſtin had to diffuſe the light of the goſpel in general, we find he was particularly zealous for his own authority, and extremely ſolicitous to ſubject the Britiſh Chriſtians, in the remote parts of the iſland, to his metropolitan juriſdiction, and to the doctrines and diſcipline of the ſee of Rome. This is a circumſtance the more remarkable, as the Britiſh biſhops of that age had more enlarged views of things: accordingly they diſclaimed all ſubmiſſion to the Roman church, and nobly aſſerted their independence *.

* Abſtract from the Library, p. 129.

This

This is particularly related by Spelman †, who ſays, that Auſtin, by the aid of Ethelbert, King of Kent, called a council of Saxon and Britiſh biſhops, to meet in the confines of the Mercians, on the borders of Worceſterſhire and Herefordſhire, who met under an oak, in imitation of the pagan Britons, and performed their ſuperſtitions, as an imitation, and yet a correction, of their idolatry. He inſiſted upon their keeping the feſtival of Eaſter, and adminiſtering the ſacraments after the manner of the Roman church, and this with all the haughtineſs of a Roman Emperor. The Britiſh biſhops, and many learned men, differing from the Romiſh prieſt, rejected his traditions which he brought from Rome, and deteſted his pride, renounced his authority, and would not accept of him for their archbiſhop, as he deſired to be, and for the ſpace of an hunderd years at leaſt refuſed to communicate with thoſe that had received theſe traditions and devices. Then the biſhops and churches of Scotland joined with the Britons againſt thoſe new obſervances, which the ſaid Auguſtin brought from Rome. At that time there were near a thouſand monks at the monaſtery at Bangor in Wales, who diſtinguiſhed themſelves for their ſobriety, ſupporting themſelves by labour, and ſpending their leiſure hours in prayer and meditation. Over that church at Auſtin's coming was Dinochus, a learned man, who, when Auſtin required the Britiſh biſhops to be ſubject to his Romiſh authority, proved, by many arguments, that they did not owe him any ſuch ſubjection; whereat Auguſtin, being highly offended, is ſaid to have ſpoken to the following effect: "That if they would not accept of peace with their brethren, they ſhould receive war from their enemies; and ſeeing they would not join with him, in preaching the way of life to the Saxons, they ſhould feel the weight of their enemies ſword." To which ſome relate, that he ſtirred up

† Spelman in conciliis.

Ethelfred

Ethelfred King of Northumberland againſt them, who perfidiouſly and unmercifully ſlew many of them, which was ſoon afterwards recompenſed by ſome Britiſh princes; Blederic Duke of Cornwall, Margaduc Duke of South Wales, and Cadwan Duke of North Wales. *

Auguſtin did not long ſurvive this ineffectual effort; but, before his death, he conſecrated his fellow miſſionaries Melitus and Juſtus; the firſt of whom was ordained biſhop of London, and the other promoted to the ſee of Rocheſter: but after the death of
616 Ethelbert and Sibert, the people apoſtatiſed, and expelled theſe reverend prelates, who fled to France for refuge from Pagan perſecution. Ethelbert died A. D. 616, and Auſtin about the ſame time, and was buried at Canterbury.

Laurentius, who ſucceeded to the ſee of Canterbury, ſeemed to inherit the pride and bigotry of his predeceſſor, and ſtill laboured to ſubject the Britiſh church to the tyranny of Rome: but when the ſon of Ethelbert, and ſome other Saxon princes, relapſed into idolatry, he began to think of making his retreat; and would certainly have croſſed the ſea, but, by a ridiculous contrivance to reconvert Eadbald, viz. of pretending an appearance of St. Peter, and of receiving ſome ſevere ſtripes from him, which upon ſtripping, and ſhewing the marks to the King, he was ſo wrought upon, that he returned to the pale of the church, and reſtored the fugitive prelates. Laurentius ſoon after died, and was ſucceeded by Melitus; a prelate of noble extraction, and eminent piety; and his ſucceſſor was Juſtus of Rocheſter, who was impowered by Pope Boniface V. to conſecrate biſhops †.

* Compare Smollet's Hiſtory of England, p. 217, with the Hiſtory of the Church of Great Britain, 4to, p. 13.

† Smollet's Hiſtory, p. 216.

Library, p. 129.

Notwith-

Notwithſtanding the honour of the change in the ſtate of knowledge and religion has been chiefly attributed to Auſtin and his aſſiſtants; yet it was in a great meaſure owing to others. The Weſt Saxons were converted to chriſtianity by Berinius, who was inveſted by the Pope with the epiſcopal dignity for that purpoſe, independent of Auguſtin and his coadjutors; and particularly in the kingdom of Eaſt Anglia, Northumberland and Mercia. For before this period Paulinus had begun to propagate chriſtianity among the inhabitants of Northumberland, by the aſſiſtance of Ethelburga the wife of King Edwin; but the ſlaughter of that Prince ſoon overturned all that had been done, and the nation reverted back to idolatry; afterwards when, Oſwald, one of his ſucceſſors, was deſirous of converting his ſubjects, he ſent to the Scotch monaſtery, from whence at length he received Aidan; a perſon who deſerves to be raiſed from the obſcurity of the times, and to be mentioned with ſingular veneration and eſteem, ſince he was not only learned as any of his cotemporaries, but took peculiar care to have ſchools erected for the education of youth: he likewiſe earneſtly recommended, both to the clergy and laity, a diligent and conſtant ſtudy of the ſcriptures; being ſenſible that this was the only way of promoting a genuine and rational knowledge of divine truths, and the conſequent practice of religion. Aidan preached the goſpel to the Saxons, and by his miniſtry was the kingdom of Northumberland converted to chriſtianity. Aidan likewiſe divided his ſubſtance among the poor, and went from town to town catechiſing and inſtructing the Pagans, or confirming the Chriſtians in their faith *. 619.

The times of the heptarchy furniſh us with few ſuch examples, though they abound in the hiſtory of many perſons, diſtinguiſhed as warriors, as politicians and

* Hiſtory of the Church, p. 15.

devotees. The far greater number of Princes were likewiſe perſons of this character; two only or principally deſerve to be mentioned; the firſt is Sigebert King of Eaſt Anglia, A.D. 636, who, in conſequence of his having been an exile in France, had acquired an underſtanding and a taſte ſuperior to his cotemporaries: accordingly, when he was ſettled on the throne, he did not merely endeavour to convert his ſubjects to chriſtianity, but inſtituted ſeminaries for inſtruction in the languages and ſuch other literature as was then known: he has ſometimes been conſidered, though without ſufficient reaſon, as the founder of the univerſity of Cambridge. The ſchools appointed by him were erected in ſeveral places, and can by no means be conſidered as the eſtabliſhment of an univerſity; and his knowledge was not ſo enlarged as to preſerve him from the ſuperſtition and weakneſs of the times; for, we read, he cloſed his reign, A. D. 640, by retiring into a monaſtery. The other Prince of note is Ina, of whom we ſhall ſpeak by and by.

About this time Suſſex and the Iſle of Wight wer alſo converted, and Honorius archbiſhop of Canter bury divided England (ſo much thereof as was Chriſtian) into pariſhes; the firſt Lent began in thoſe parts of England which obeyed the Roman celebration of Eaſter.

641. Penda Prince of Mercia, having married Alfreda, daughter of Oſwy, King of Northumberland, renounced paganiſm, embraced chriſtianity, and propagated it in his dominions. Indeed Penda his father, that perſecutor of piety, was yet alive (and ſurvived two years after) ſtill perſiſting an heathen till death, but was ſo far mollified as to permit a toleration of chriſtianity in his ſubjects *.

Platina tells us †, "there was a famous ſeminary of learning at Colmkil, from whence ſprang many

* Hiſtory of the Church, p. 17.
† In Bonifacio, 4to.

eminent

eminent perſons, who not only gave a check to the beginning of antichriſtian pride at home, and in our neighbouring country, but they ſowed the ſeed of the goſpel in other nations; ſuch was that famous Rumold, who was called *Mechlinenſis Apoſtolus*. Gallas converted Helvetia from Paganiſm, as Pappas witneſſeth, and built ſundry monaſteries there. Calumba, a man of excellent learning and piety, lived ſome time at Bangor, and thence went into Burgundy, where he began a monaſtery at Luxovien, and taught the monks of his own country eſpecially to live by the work of their own hands, viſited Germany, and made many converts there, and Levin alſo turned many to the faith about Ghent and Eſca. Diuma was ordained firſt biſhop of Mercia in the reign of the Chriſtian Penda, where he converted many to the Chriſtian faith, and for his diſtinguiſhing gifts the biſhopric of Middleſex was committed to him, unto whom ſucceeded Cella, a Scot. Florentine went to Straſburg, and was the firſt biſhop thereof in 669. About the ſame time Kellian, the firſt biſhop of Wortſburg, firſt inſtructed the people of Eaſt France in the Chriſtian faith. Colonat a prieſt, and Thomas a deacon, followed him in all his travels; Barcard ſucceeded, to whom King Pippin gave a dukedom."

Agatho Pope, A. D. 678, his character, &c.

Pope Agatho very early diſcovered a zealous regard to promote truth and peace throughout the churches, and accordingly ſummoned the biſhops of Italy to meet at Rome, in order to chuſe, together with him, ſuch perſons as ſhould be judged the beſt qualified for probity and learning, to diſcharge ſo great a truſt.

Purſuant thereunto, Pope Agatho ſent John (the archchaunter of St. Peter's in Rome) into England, to compoſe the difference between Honorius and Wilfrid, the two archbiſhops, and withal to deliver them the acts of Pope Martin I. and to teach them to ſing the liturgy according to the cuſtom of Rome. Be-

nedictus Biſcopius, a nobleman of England, went to Rome in the ſervice of the church, and brought many books into the monaſteries of Tinmouth and Wirmouth.

Bede, ſpeaking of the cuſtom of thoſe days, ſays, that at this time they frequented the church with a zealous regard to the public worſhip; the care of the doctors and prieſts was to ſerve God, not the world; to feed ſouls, not their own bodies: that in thoſe days, whereſoever a clerk or monk did come, he was received as a ſervant of God; that the people gave good heed unto the words of his exhortation; for maſſes were not then performed as the common ſervice of the church, nor were the prieſts prohibited to marry; but Bede, in the ſubſequent part of his hiſtory, complains of the degeneracy of the church, and prevalence of popiſh doctrines and ceremonies; and more eſpecially of the uſurpation, power and influence of the clergy, inſtances of which are not wanted in the annals of our own and other nations, many of which will occur in the following part of this hiſtory.

After this Theodorus (who ſucceeded *Deus-dedit*) biſhop of Canterbury, brought many books thither, erected a well-choſen library, and encouraged his clergy to make uſe thereof. He rigorouſly profeſſed conformity to Rome in the obſervation of Eaſter, and for that purpoſe a council was called at Hartford: there Eaſter was ſettled according to the Romiſh rite. In this ſynod nine other articles were concluded on, as Stapleton hath thus tranſlated them out of Bede.

I. That no biſhop ſhould have ought to do in another dioceſe, but be contented with the charge of the people committed unto him.

II. That no biſhop ſhould any-wiſe trouble ſuch monaſteries as were conſecrated, and given to God, nor violently take from them any thing that was theirs.

III. That

III. That monks ſhould not go from one monaſtery to another, unleſs by the leave of their own abbot; but ſhould continue in the obedience which they promiſed at the time of their converſion and entrance into religion.

IV. That none of the clergy forſaking his own biſhop, ſhould run up and down where he liſts; nor when he came any where, ſhould be received without letters of commendation from his dioceſan, &c.

V. That ſuch biſhops and clerks as are ſtrangers, be content with ſuch hoſpitality as is given them; and that it be lawful for none of them to execute any office of a prieſt, without the permiſſion of the biſhop in whoſe dioceſe they are known to be.

VI. It hath ſeemed good to us all, that a ſynod and convocation ſhould be aſſembled once a year, on the firſt of Auguſt, at the place called Cloveſhoo.

VII. That no biſhop ſhould ambitiouſly prefer himſelf above another; but ſhould all acknowledge the time and order of their conſecration.

VIII. That the number of the biſhops ſhould be increaſed, as the Chriſtians became more numerous.

IX. That no man commit adultery, nor fornication; that no man forſake his own wife, but only for adultery, as the holy goſpel teacheth. And if any man put away his wife, being lawfully married unto him, if he will be a right Chriſtian man, let him be joined to no other; but let him ſo continue, or elſe be reconciled again to his own wife.

This ſynod Stapleton called *the firſt of the Engliſh nation*, that is upon record, whoſe canons are completely extant.

INA, *K. of Weſſex, A. D. 688. His character.*

The other prince that comes under our notice, is INA, King of Weſſex, who ſuſtains the character of a lawgiver. He cannot, indeed, be compared with the celebrated legiſlators of Grecian antiquity: he was not ſo profound as Lycurgus, nor ſo wiſe as Solon;

Solon; but ſurely the firſt Saxon monarch, who compoſed a body of written laws, is an object worthy our attention. This work he executed by the advice, and with the concurrence of his nobles, biſhops, and other eminent perſons. Some of his inſtitutes related to the church, and ſome to the ſtate. They continued in force a conſiderable time, and at length became the foundation of the code eſtabliſhed by Alfred. But excellent as Ina was in ſeveral reſpects, he diſgraced himſelf by an abſurd ſuperſtition, and introduced into his dominions the tax called Peter's pence, which afterwards extended through all England.

Urged by miſtaken notions of religion, he reſigned his crown, and took a journey to Rome, in order to confer with Pope Gregory II. He returned to his own country to take leave of his wife Ethelburga, who retired into a monaſtery at Barking; then returning to Rome, he aſſumed the habit of a monk, and died in obſcurity and contempt, A. D. 727.

A little before the reign of Ina there flouriſhed in Kent, Theodore, a native of Tarſus, and archbiſhop of Canterbury. This man was more learned than any of his predeceſſors, and deſerves to be recorded, as taking uncommon pains to promote the cauſe of literature; ſchools were erected by him, in order to teach the languages, geometry, arithmetic, muſic, and aſtronomy; and ſo ſucceſsful were theſe ſchools, that Bede aſſures us he knew ſeveral perſons educated in them, who were able to converſe in Greek and Latin as fluently as their native tongue. This was, undoubtedly, a great attainment; and though the deſign of Theodore ſeems principally to have been to carry on his ſcheme of ſpreading the cuſtoms and diſcipline of the Roman church; yet, whatever views his were, it muſt be owned that the encouragement of knowledge was a noble and generous method of executing his purpoſes.

Whether

Whether it was owing to the ſeminaries eſtabliſhed by this celebrated prelate, or to what other cauſes, the imperfection of records will not permit us to determine; but during the latter end of the ſeventh, and the beginning of the eighth centuries, learning, ſuch as it was, was rather upon the advance in England. There is ſomething in the ſtile and manner of the writers, who lived at that period, which is ſuperior to the authors who preceded or came after them for ſeveral ages; and then flouriſhed a ſet of men, who, all things conſidered, deſerved a large ſhare of reputation. Egbert, archbiſhop of York, was famous as a great collector of books, a ſcholar, and a patron of literature. Eddius compoſed the life of biſhop Wilfrid in a better taſte of language than had hitherto been cuſtomary. Acca produced a number of theological pieces.

Bede *the Venerable, his character.*

But of all the eminent perſons that adorned this æra, Bede was the moſt illuſtrious; and indeed, notwithſtanding the defects of his works, which are chiefly owing to the defects of the times, he was really an extraordinary man. He was the firſt who wrote a regular eccleſiaſtical hiſtory; and though it is too full of fables and falſe miracles, it ſtill continues to be valuable. Nor was his knowledge confined to divinity and the annals of the church, but reached to the arts and ſciences in general; to grammar, aſtronomy, chronology, natural philoſophy, and ethics. It is true, his treatiſes on theſe ſubjects will be found very imperfect, when compared with the enlightened productions of modern ages; nevertheleſs, they prove him to have had an uncommon genius and application. He obtained when young the appellation of Venerable, and will always be regarded as a character that is entitled to peculiar honour and eſteem.

Bede was the luminary of the north, where he conſtantly lived; and next to him in reputation was Aldhelm, who was ſomething before him in point of

time, and the chief ornament in the ſouth of England. It is univerſally agreed he was the firſt Engliſhman who compoſed in Latin; none having heretofore done it, in this iſland, but ſuch as were either foreigners from the continent, or Iriſh, or Scots, or Britons: he has likewiſe himſelf aſſured us, that he was the firſt who introduced poetry among the Saxons, and who wrote upon the meaſure of verſes. He died A. D. 734, aged 72 *.

About the year 700, Egfrid expelled Wilfred from his ſee at York, on account of his factious ſpirit and dangerous influence with the people; but Wilfred appealing to the Pope, it was decreed in a full ſynod that he ſhould be reſtored; but Egfrid ſet the Pope and his decree at defiance. However ſuch was the zeal of Wilfred, that the merit of converting the South Saxons is aſcribed to him, after his expulſion from the ſee of York; and though he is ſaid to have confirmed his doctrines by miracles, his great ſucceſs ſeems to have been owing to the favourable diſpoſition of Adelwalch, who had already embraced the Chriſtian faith, and to the great influence Wilfred acquired among the common people.

The archbiſhop of Canterbury not only endeavoured to extend his juriſdiction over the Britiſh church, but alſo to reduce the Scottiſh clergy to the dominion of the Pope. Theodore, a Greek, having been promoted to the ſee of Canterbury, held a ſynod at Harford, where, among other particulars in the book of canons, to be diligently obſerved, he inſiſted upon their keeping Eaſter according to the literal direction, on the Sunday after the fourteenth day of the firſt month. This was a ſtroke aimed at the Britons and Scots, who celebrated that feſtival by another rule; and two biſhops from Icolm-kill had prevailed upon the Northumbrians to adopt their uſage in this reſpect, though they had been converted by Roman

* Hiſtory of the Church of Great Britain, p. 22.

miſſionaries.

miſſionaries. Oſwy, King of that country, conſidering the difference as a ſubject of great importance, propoſed a conference at Whitby in Yorkſhire, between Colman, one of the Scottiſh prelates, ſupported by ſeveral monks of his nation, and Wilfred, who had already brought over the Queen to his opinion. The diſpute was of conſequence decided in favour of this courtly abbot; while Colman and his party recounced their preferment, and retired to Scotland.

About the year A. D. 709, a ſynod was held at Alanceſter, in Worceſterſhire, to promote the building of Eveſham abbey, which was done accordingly; and the ſame was bountifully endowed by Offa, and other Mercian kings, with large revenues. Not long after another ſynod was called at London, to introduce into England the practice of image-worſhip, which as yet was no public practice. Much about the ſame time it became faſhionable for the Kings and Queens of England to turn monks and nuns, and retire into convents; ſo that in the ſpace of a few years nine diſtinguiſhed themſelves by this monkiſh practice. From hence we may likewiſe aſſert, that the Romiſh power and ſuperſtition gained ground in the Engliſh nations. Aldhelm, biſhop of Sherborn, wrote a book in favour of the Romiſh time, and manner of celebrating Eaſter, which had no ſmall influence on the minds of the people.

The ſee of Canterbury was at the death of Cuthbert filled with Bridwin, a noble Saxon, of remarkable piety and diſcretion. But he ſurvived but three years, when Adulph being elected archbiſhop, received the pall from Pope Paul V. This prelate exerted all his intereſt and induſtry to prevent Offa, King of the Mercians, from erecting an archiepiſcopal ſee within his dominions, by which his own metropolitanical power would be diſmembered; but Pope Adrian, to whom the diſpute was referred, decided in favour of Offa, whom he empowered to erect Litchfield into an archbiſhopric,

to

to which all the Mercian biſhops were declared ſuffragans.

This was the laſt blow given to the independency of the Britiſh church, for it fixed Offa and his new elected archbiſhop Adulph, in the intereſt of Rome, which was ſo ſenſible of the great influence it had gained by this compliance with Offa's ambition, that the Pope ſent Gregory biſhop of Oſtia, and Theophilact, another prelate, in quality of legates to England. Theſe came on pretence of reforming the diſcipline of the Engliſh church, and executing the partition of the metropolitanical power of Canterbury. A ſynod was accordingly held in Northumberland, and gave an aſſent to all the articles which had been already prepared by the legates. Theſe were in effect little more than a confirmation of canons, which had formerly received the ſanction of the church, excepting however two new articles, one of which is an admonition to kings to reſpect the clergy, and the other a caution to the people againſt chuſing illegitimate ſovereigns. The decrees of this ſynod were afterwards confirmed by another, held at Calcluith, which was more frequent and full than the other, and Adulph received the pall from Rome, without Lambert's daring to murmur, for fear of being impeached of treaſonable practices.

Offa having exerted himſelf ſo much in favour of the church, was conſidered in other countries as a very religious Prince, and received from Charlemagne the decrees of the ſecond councils of Nice, recommending image-worſhip, againſt which the famous Alcuin, who was an Engliſhman, and a tutor to Charlemagne, had writ with great energy and learning. Indeed his performance had a remarkable effect among the Germans, for by means of it image-worſhip was ſolemnly condemned at the council of Frankfort *.

* Smollet, p. 218.

Several

Several ſynods were ſucceſſively held at Canterbury, at Cloveſhoo, at Calcluith, and another afterwards at Cloveſhoo, all relating to matters of a beneficiary nature, and to the prerogative of the Pope or Princes.

Decrees of the ſynod of Cloveſhoo, A. D. 747.

In the year of our Lord 747, there was a famous ſynod held at Cloveſhoo, or Clyff, near Rocheſter in Kent. The matter of the debate related to the government and diſcipline of the church. This ſynod was compoſed of twelve Engliſh prelates; Ethelbald likewiſe King of the Mercians, and the temporal nobility, were preſent at it, and many of the clergy. The following compendium of the decrees of this ſynod will afford us an idea of the ſtate of religion at that time.

At the opening of the ſynod, Pope Zachary's letters were firſt read in the original by archbiſhop Cuthbert, and then tranſlated to the audience. In theſe letters, as *Malmsbury* relates, the Pope admoniſhed the Engliſh clergy to reform their lives, and threatened thoſe with excommunication that continued in their irregularities.

This preliminary being over, the biſhops proceeded to draw up a body of canons, ſome of which I ſhall mention.

1ſt, It was decreed, that every biſhop ſhould be careful to ſupport his character, execute every part of his office, and maintain the canons and conſtitutions of the church, againſt all ſort of liberty or encroachment. And that thoſe of this order ſhould anſwer the expectations of their ſtations, nor engage in ſecular affairs ſo far as to be diſabled for their functions; but to be remarkably eminent for their probity, ſelf-denial, and learning; that by this means they may be qualified to make an impreſſion upon the people, both by their inſtructions, and by their practice.

2dly, That the prelates and clergy ſhould be careful to keep a good correſpondence with each other, without any flattering applications to any perſon; conſidering that they are the ſervants of the ſame maſter, and intruſted with the ſame commiſſion; and therefore,

fore, though they are divided by distance of place and country, they ought to be united in affection, and pray for each other, that every one may discharge his office with integrity and conscience.

These two canons, but especially the last, seem to be drawn on purpose to guard the liberties of the English church against the pretensions of Rome, and to throw off that precedent of servitude, which *Boniface* had set them in his letter to archbishop *Cuthbert*. It is true, they do not mention the Pope; but by obliging the bishops to stand up in defence of the antient canons, not to flatter any person upon the score of his ecclesiastical distinction, because the bishops have all of them the honour of the same commission and employment; these general glances, with the grounds, upon which they stand, seem plainly designed to fence against that submission to the papal chair which Boniface recommended.

3dly, That the respective bishops should visit their diocese every year, call the people of all ranks and conditions together, and be particularly careful to preach to those, who lie most out of the way of instruction; and not suffer any unwarrantable and heathenish customs, such as divination, amulets, charms, &c. to continue in the diocese.

The fourth, fifth, and seventh, relate to the regulation of monasteries. The sixth orders the bishops not to ordain any priest, without a previous examination upon the points of learning and morals.

The eighth puts the priests in mind of the advantage of their character, and the business for which they were ordained. That they ought to abstract themselves from the world as much as may be, and spend their time in reading, prayer and exhortation, and other exercises of religion; and, more particularly in the next canon, they are enjoined to preach, baptise, and inspect the manners of the laity in those precincts and divisions assigned them by their respective bishops.

biſhops. From hence it appears, that the ſubdiviſions of the dioceſes were in ſome meaſure formed, and the lines of pariſhes ſtruck out.

The tenth canon orders the prieſts to be thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine and ſervice of the church; to teach the creed and Lord's prayer in Engliſh, and explain the ſacraments to the people. This direction is agreeable to Bede's advice to *Egbert* biſhop of York; where he tells him, that both the clergy and laity ought to have the creed and Lord's prayer by heart; and that himſelf had tranſlated them into Engliſh for the advantage of the common people, and thoſe that did not underſtand Latin.

In the eleventh canon, the prieſts are enjoined to be uniform in the exerciſe of their function, and to baptiſe, preach and govern with the ſame rules and meaſures.

The twelfth regulates the church-muſic, provides for the ſolemnity of the performance, and forbids the clergy to profane the ſervice with the air of the theatre. And in the cloſe of the canon, the prieſts are enjoined to keep within the bounds of their order, and not to do any thing which belongs to the biſhop.

By the thirteenth, the holy days are to be kept every where on the ſame day, and the time to be governed by the Roman martyrology.

The fourteenth provides for the religious obſervance of the Sunday or Lord's day, that it ought to be wholly dedicated to God's ſervice; that all ſecular buſineſs and travelling, unleſs in caſe of neceſſity, ought to be forborn; that the people are to be called to church to hear the word of God, and receive the ſacraments.

The fifteenth orders the ſeven canonical hours of prayer ſhould be conſtantly obſerved according to cuſtom, and that nothing ſhould be introduced but what

is

is warrantable by the authority of ſcripture, and agreeable to the practice of the Roman church.

By the ſixteenth, the litanies or rogations are enjoined to be kept with great ſolemnity by the clergy and people; that which is called the great litany, by the Romiſh church, is ordered to be kept the twenty-fourth day of April.

The other, which ſtands upon the antient practice of the iſland, falls three days before our Saviour's aſcenſion; on which divine ſervice is to be performed, and the people to faſt till three in the afternoon.

By the ſeventeenth, the days on which St. Gregory the Great, and Auguſtin, archbiſhop of Canterbury, died, are to be made holy-days; and that in ſinging the litany, the name of Auguſtine ſhall be mentioned after St. Gregory.

The eighteenth canon provides for the ſolemn times of faſting in Ember-weeks: and that the people ſhould have notice given to provide themſelves.

The nineteenth and twentieth relate to the government and behaviour of monaſteries, with reſpect to habit, company and employment.

The twenty-firſt is levelled againſt drunkenneſs, luxury, and inſobriety of converſation.

The twenty-ſecond, enjoins the religious to live in a conſtant preparation for the receiving the ſacrament of the holy euchariſt, or the body and blood of our Saviour, as the canon words expreſs it.

From hence I ſhall paſs to the twenty-fifth, by which the biſhops, at their coming from their ſynod, are obliged to convene the prieſts and abbots of their dioceſes, to publiſh the canons of the council, and command their obſervance. And if any diſorder proves too ſtrong for the biſhop's correction, he is to acquaint the archbiſhop with it at the meeting of the next ſynod. But not a word of carrying the complaint farther to Rome.

The

The twenty-ſixth ſtates the right uſe of charity, and provides againſt wrong views and miſapplications in this duty; and here the ſynod declares, that alms are not given to commute for *penance*, to diſpenſe with the diſcipline of the church, or procure us a liberty for ſinning: that thoſe who think the juſtice of God can be bribed in this manner, make their charity inſignificant, and bring an addition to their guilt: that alms ſignifies *mercy* both in the name and thing; and that they are no leſs a charity to the giver than to the receiver. And therefore he that has a true compaſſion for his own ſoul, ſhould always give that which is his own, and not circumvent or oppreſs one neighbour to be charitable to another.

The twenty-ſeventh dilates upon the uſefulneſs, and directs in the manner and qualifications, of ſinging pſalms. That this part of divine ſervice ought to be performed with due recollection, with pious diſpoſitions and poſtures of reſpect; and, after the ſinging is ended, there are prayers mentioned both for the living and the dead; and thoſe that do not underſtand Latin, are to pray in the vulgar tongue. The prayer for the dead runs thus: *O Lord, we beſeech thee, for thy great mercy, grant that the ſoul of* ſuch a perſon *may be ſecured in a ſtate of indiſturbance and repoſe; and that he may be admitted, with the reſt of thy ſaints, into the regions of light and happineſs.*

This canon, like the laſt, puts the people in mind not to depend upon the performance of one branch of duty, to the neglect of another. It ſeems ſome people began to believe that one good action was a ſort of diſpenſation in other caſes; and, which was ſtill more extravagant, they fancied they might perform their duty by proxy, built upon foreign merit, and be good by the virtue of their neighbours. The canon is the larger in expoſing the vanity and danger of this reliance, becauſe they had a large inſtance of ſuch an unreaſonable expectation in a layman of condition.

This

This perſon, it ſeems, had forfeited the communion of the church, and was put under diſcipline for ſome great crime: now he deſired the rigour of his penance might be taken off, and that he might be reconciled upon the ſuggeſtion following. He acquainted thoſe ſpiritual directors he belonged to, that he had procured ſeveral perſons to faſt, ſing pſalms, and diſtribute charity on his account; ſo that if he was to live three hundred years, there was enough done for him by other good people, though he ſhould do little or nothing himſelf: but the canon declares, with great indignation, againſt the folly of ſuch a preſumption.

The laſt *canon* enjoins, That Kings and Princes, and the whole body of the commonwealth, ſhall be publickly prayed for in the church.

The biſhops names that ſat in this ſynod were, Cuthbert, archbiſhop of Canterbury; Dunnus, biſhop of Rocheſter, &c.; and Podda, biſhop of Leiceſter, &c. Linſey, who governed the ſees of Wincheſter, Sherborne, &c. in the kingdom of the Weſt Saxons; Herdulp, biſhop of Dunwich and Helman; Egwulf, biſhop of London; Milred, of Worceſter; Alwi, of Lindſey; and Sigga, of Selcey in Suſſex: but Egbert, being of the royal family and brother to King Eadbert, was not there.

When the ſynod broke up, archbiſhop Cuthbert diſpatched his deacon to give Boniface, archbiſhop of Mentz, an account of what was done, purſuant to the true intent and deſign thereof by Ethelbald, and thoſe biſhops who acceded to its convention, and confirmed the decrees by their ſubſcription *.

About the year 755, Kenulphus, King of the Weſt Saxons, conferred large privileges on the monaſtery of Abingdon, in Berkſhire, A. D. 758, and dead bodies were firſt admitted to be buried in churches, which by degrees brought in great ſuperſtition †.

* Collier's Eccleſ. Hiſtory, B. II. 159.

† Hiſtory of the Church of Great Britain, p. 22. Ibid. 23.

In

In the year 789, the Danes firſt invaded England with a conſiderable army. Lindesfern or holy iſland was the firſt that felt the fury of theſe Pagans, but ſoon after no place was ſecure from their cruelty. *The Daniſh Invaſion, A. D. 789.*

ETHELBERT VI. King of the Eaſt Saxons, went to marry the daughter of Offa, and Offa perfidiouſly cauſed him to be murdered, after which to commute for his ſin he gave the tenth part of all he had to the church, and ſeveral lands to the ſee of Hereford, and then he went to Rome, repaired, beautified and richly endowed the Engliſh monaſtery, and there confirmed to Pope Adrian the gift of Peter pence; then was the corps of St. Alban, in a pompous manner, taken up, inſhrined and adored by the ſpectators. Offa likewiſe procured the canonization of St. Alban, the abſolution of his own ſins and many murders, and then returning home founded the monaſtery of St. Alban, beſtowed great riches upon it in lands, exempted it from paying Peter-pence, epiſcopal juriſdiction, and the like, and died the next year.

EGBERT, *the Firſt King of England*, A. D. 800.

Egbert, King of the Weſt Saxons, in the year 800, having vanquiſhed Mercia, Kent, Eſſex, and Northumberland, received a general invitation to accept the ſovereignty of England, both in church and ſtate; in conſequence of which he returned and mounted the throne of Weſſex, and began to reign over a people both rich and powerful, in whoſe affluence and affection he foreſaw his own future greatneſs. He had, in all probability, already planned the union of the heptarchy; but before he would impart the leaſt hint of that deſign to the other Saxon nations, he reſolved to humble the Britons in ſuch a manner that they ſhould be in no condition

to interfere with the execution of his grand project. Mean while, in order to avert the ſuſpicion of the Saxons, he acted as a mediator in all the differences ſubſiſting between the princes of the heptarchy, and in particular effected a reconciliation between Cardulf King of Northumberland, and Kenulf King of Mercia, who had taken the field againſt each other, and were on the eve of terminating their quarrel by the ſword.

Theſe good offices, employed with ſuch moderation, the prudence he manifeſted in his own government, and known capacity in the affairs of war and peace, raiſed his character to ſuch a degree of reputation, that he was conſidered as the father of the Engliſh nation, and choſen chief of the Saxon heptarchy.

Egbert having united the heptarchy, was ſo engaged by continual wars, that he had very little time to advert to eccleſiaſtical affairs; and theſe troubles detached the people ſo much from the practice and ſtudy of religious duties, that the whole nation was overſpread with ignorance, and a total relaxation of morals enſued. During this reign, however, Withlaf, the tributary King of Mercia, granted to the abbey of Croyland a famous charter, which was confirmed by the ſtates of the kingdom. Among other privileges and exemptions contained in this charter, it ordained that the monaſtery of Croyland ſhould be held as a ſanctuary, which no officer of juſtice ſhould preſume to violate, on pain of loſing his right foot; and that the abbots and monks ſhould be entertained through all parts of Mercia, with all the honours and diſtinction due to a prince of the blood. This deed was confirmed by Egbert, and ſeems to have been the only eccleſiaſtical tranſaction of his reign: but his ſucceſſor Ethelwulf, who was entirely governed by the clergy, and left the adminiſtration to Swithin, biſhop of Wincheſter, extended his compliance to the church

church farther than it had ever been carried by any of his predeceſſors, and beſtowed upon it the tythes of all England, in an authentic charter, confirmed in a general aſſembly at Wincheſter, and ſigned by the ſubſtituted kings of Mercia and Eaſt Anglia.

It might naturally be expected, that when the ſeven kingdoms came under the dominion of one Prince, the ſtate of things would grow better, and knowledge begin to revive in England: but the fact was far otherwiſe; and if we enquire into the cauſes of it, ſeveral circumſtances will be found that contributed to the production of the contrary event; the wars carried on by Egbert againſt his neighbours gave riſe to much confuſion and deſolation, and when he had reduced the nation under his government, it would be ſtill a conſiderable time before affairs would be brought into ſo peaceable and flouriſhing a condition, as was neceſſary to the progreſs of learning. Moreover, the ſpirit of the age was directly oppoſite to literary improvement, an univerſal ignorance prevailed, and there was no thought about the cultivation and improvement of human nature. To this concurred the abſurd ſentiments that were propagated with regard to religion, and the enormous power and influence of the clergy, which could only be ſupported by the ignorance and ſtupidity of the people. Indeed the ſituation of the whole world, during this period, and for many centuries, afford a ſtrong proof, that where the ſcriptures are neglected, and rational principles concerning religious matters totally excluded, the other branches of ſcience, and the faculties of the mind in general, will greatly ſuffer. It may perhaps be ſuppoſed that the monaſteries had a tendency to preſerve and favour literature: but whatever their tendency was, they had in reality rather a contrary effect; they were not examples of piety, or ſeats of the muſes; the perſons who reſided in them did not fix upon them as retreats to awaken their devotion, and

enlarge their underſtanding, but as places where they might live exempt from military ſervice, and ſecurely indulge their luſt and vices; ſo that monaſteries were little elſe than the abodes of wickedneſs. Bede complains of them again and again in his writings, and he has told us they were in ſo corrupt a ſtate, that ſuch as deſired to be ſincerely pious were obliged to go abroad for education *.

Bede likewiſe informs us, that the Chriſtian church at that time was far gone from its original purity; for the monks had introduced ſeveral practices into the church, which were not of apoſtolic inſtitution, making uſe of every means in their power to inſpire people with great reverence for the Pope of Rome, and to an high veneration for monaſteries, ſo that it is ſurpriſing how many was erected, and how richly they were endowed even in the infancy of the church.

The reigns of *Ethelbald*, *Ethelbert*, and *Ethelred* I. are very barren of all eccleſiaſtical matter; except the deſtruction of monaſteries by the Danes, which the hiſtorians in thoſe days have deſcribed in very pathetic terms; regretting in particular the three famous convents of Croyland, Ely, and Maderhamſtede, in which the monks were maſſacred, and their libraries burned. We have already obſerved that the cruelty of the Danes was ſo inveterate againſt every perſon appertaining to the culture of the Chriſtian religion, that thoſe few monks who eſcaped their barbarity, either quitted the kingdom, or had recourſe to other employments for a livelihood, when they found themſelves deprived of the revenues upon which they formerly ſubſiſted; ſo that *Alfred* the Great, when he triumphed over thoſe invaders, could find no monks in England, and was obliged to repleniſh the monaſteries he built with eccleſiaſtics invited from foreign countries. This great prince, who contributed ſo

* Library, p. 180.

much

much to the reſtoration of learning and religion, enacted many eccleſiaſtical as well as civil inſtitutions. The firſt part of theſe is little more than a tranſcript of the decalogue, omitting the ſecond commandment, becauſe repugnant to image-worſhip, which had by this time gained footing in England. Theſe are followed by an abridgment of the regulations inſtituted by *Moſes*, as recorded in the book of Exodus; and a recapitulation of the goſpel-diſpenſation; after which we find a ſhort introduction to his code of civil laws, collected from thoſe of *Ina*, *Offa*, and *Ethelbert*, the firſt of all the Saxon Kings who were converted to chriſtianity.

Another hiſtorian gives us much the ſame account. Introductory to the character of Alfred, he obſerves, that the grand circumſtance which deſtroyed the very traces of knowledge, and cut it up by the roots, was the invaſion of the Danes, which ſo ſoon ſucceeded the abolition of the heptarchy, that there was no time to bring the kingdom into order and diſcipline. In conſequence of the numerous and repeated attacks of that people, who were more barbarous than the Saxons, an almoſt univerſal ruin was ſpread through the iſland, and the monks were totally diſperſed, ſo that the few among them that had applied themſelves to uſeful learning, were driven away or murdered; the wiſdom they poſſeſſed, whatever it was, periſhed with them. Hence, with reſpect to the hiſtory of religion and learning, little can be recorded from the reign of Egbert to the reign of Alfred, who, when he came to the crown, found ſcience in ſo deplorable a condition, that he has himſelf aſſured us that he ſcarce remembered one man on the ſouth ſide the Humber who underſtood his prayers in the Engliſh tongue, or could tranſlate a piece of Latin into his native language *.

* Library, p. 180.

ALFRED, A. D. 872.

When the Danes had already ſubdued Northumberland and Eaſt Anglia, and gained footing in the very heart of Weſſex, all the churches and monaſteries burnt, and the whole country depopulated, Alfred ſeaſonably and ſucceſsfully aſſumed the dignity of King, and merited that of father to his people *.

Alfred's character. Were it not for Alfred the period we are writing of would hardly deſerve to be mentioned; but he has thrown a mighty luſtre upon it, for in him we meet with abilities and accompliſhments that are truly aſtoniſhing. If we had materials, it would be very delightful to trace the ſteps by which ſuch a mind advanced to maturity, to mark the incidents that awakened the vigour of his genius, and rendered him ſo diſtinguiſhed and enlightened in a barbarous age, and amidſt a ſcene of general diſcord. We are informed, that when he was very young, he was twice at Rome, and perhaps a perſecuting impreſſion might be made upon him, while in that famous city: for though Rome itſelf was then in an exceeding low ſtate of ſcience, compared with what it had formerly been; yet it was vaſtly ſuperior in this reſpect to the dark and frozen regions of the north. But whatever impreſſions Alfred might receive at that place, no immediate advancement in knowledge ſeems to have been the reſult of them; for we are told his education was ſo far neglected, that he did not learn to read till he was twelve years of age; but when he had made a beginning, his capacity and aſſiduity was ſuch, that his progreſs was equally ſurpriſing.

He was undoubtedly in every inſtance one of the moſt illuſtrious characters recorded in hiſtory, and deſervedly remains to this day the peculiar favourite of the Engliſh nation.

* Smollet, p. 249.

With

With regard to his perſonal character, we ſhall find that he was ſuperior to any man of his time; conſidered as a poet and mathematician, ſuch was his ardent deſire for the cultivation of his mind, that he always retained about him the moſt accompliſhed ſcholars he could meet with, with whom he perpetually engaged in literary enquiries and purſuits.

Nor was his wiſdom locked up in his own breaſt, and reſerved merely for his private entertainment, but was diffuſed around him in a plentiful manner. He was extremely ſolicitous to have his ſubjects enlightened and improved; and ſought out methods that could contribute to ſo deſirable an effect. For which purpoſe, one of his firſt ſteps was to invite from the Britiſh monaſteries, and from the continent, as many learned men as poſſible, whom he received and treated with great marks of friendſhip, and in concurrence with them erected a number of ſchools for the inſtruction of his people.

Among the learned ſtrangers who aſſiſted *Alfred* in his great work of reſtoring the luſtre of the church, and reviving the arts and ſciences, the principal were, Johannes Scotus Erigena, an Iriſh Scot, who had ſtudied at Athens and other foreign countries, and made himſelf maſter of the Greek and oriental languages; he then repaired thro' Italy to France, where he acquired an eminent degree of favour and familiarity with Charles the Bald; and the fame of his talents extending to England, he was invited hither by Alfred, whom he inſtructed in the liberal arts, and whoſe friendſhip he enjoyed, notwithſtanding his oppoſition to the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, which rendered him obnoxious to the ſee of Rome. Towards the latter part of his life, he opened a ſchool in the monaſtery of Malmeſbury, where his ſcholars murdered him with their penknives; though we are ignorant of the occaſion. Another foreigner, for whom *Alfred* conceived a very early affection, was one *Grimbald*, who entertained him ſo hoſpitably in

his journey to Rome, that he afterwards created him abbot of Wincheſter. He was a learned divine, well ſkilled in muſic, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf for his talents in oratory. The firſt abbot of the new abbey, founded in the iſle of Ethelney, was a native of Old Saxony, and almoſt all the monks, prieſts, and deacons were foreigners; not but that his own country produced a number of men who diſtinguiſhed themſelves by their piety and erudition, namely, *Aſſer Menevenis*, a monk of St. David's, ſo attached to his retirement, that all the careſſes and favours of Alfred could not prevail upon him to forſake it entirely, though he conſented to live one half-year with the King, who promoted him to the biſhopric of Sherburn, and beſtowed upon him many other marks of his particular regard. Yet he muſt not be confounded with his name-ſake and uncle, Aſſerius, archbiſhop of St. David's, who wrote part of Alfred's life. *John*, the monk, belonging to the ſame monaſtery, to whoſe inſtruction the King owed his knowledge of the Latin tongue. *Werefred*, biſhop of Worceſter, who had been driven by the Danes into baniſhment; from whence he was recalled by Alfred, who had employed him to tranſlate Gregory's Dialogues. *Plegmund*, archbiſhop of Canterbury; and *Dunwulf*, biſhop of Wincheſter, who is ſaid by ſome authors to have been the very cow-herd whom *Alfred* ſerved in diſguiſe. That prince it ſeems diſcovered in him a genius far above his ſtation in life, which he exalted in proportion to his merit.

But of all the eccleſiaſtics who dignified the court of *Alfred*, *Neotus*, or St. *Neot*, was the moſt remarkable for his learning, piety, and example: in being deſcended from the blood royal of the Eaſt-Angles, he was reſpected as a prince as well as a prelate; and is ſaid, by his perſonal authority and admonitions, to have reſtricted the ſallies of Alfred's youth. He was buried at St. Guerer's church, at Gainſbury, in Cornwall;

Cornwall; and ſuch at that time was the general opinion of his ſanctity, that he ſupplanted the Corniſh ſaint, and gave his own name to the church, which was thenceforward called *Neotſtow*. The palace of Earl Alric, in Huntingdonſhire, was afterwards converted into a monaſtery, and dedicated to this ſaint, whoſe body was tranſlated thither; though not ſuffered to remain in this place neither, for, in the reign of King John, his bones were removed from this St. Neot to the abbey of Croyland. This eccleſiaſtic, and the greateſt part of thoſe above-mentioned, taught together in the univerſity of Oxford, which was regulated and endowed by Alfred, who frequently aſſiſted in perſon at their exerciſes, until ſome diſputes aroſe between the native and foreign profeſſors, and then Grimbald retired to the monaſtery at Wincheſter, which the King had lately founded *.

Moreover, that the path of knowledge might be rendered ſtill eaſier to the Engliſh nation, Alfred employed the ableſt perſons who were about him, in writing ſuch books as were calculated for the information of the multitude; a moſt judicious and uſeful ſcheme! and as there were but very few who were capable of putting it into execution, he commenced author himſelf, and compoſed a variety of pieces; ſo great a variety, that we are aſtoniſhed at his finding leiſure to produce them in the midſt of the dangerous wars, and important public concerns, in which he was continually engaged.

The motive from which his literary performances took their riſe, does him honour: he did not write from a principle of vanity, but from a laudable view for the improvement and happineſs of mankind; and accordingly we find the matter of them were worthy of his character, as the prince and father of his country. Many of his compoſitions relate to the principles of government and laws; and others of them were calcu-

* Smollet.

lated

lated for the inſtruction of his people in general, adapted to inſpire them with devotion, to excite their attention to the moral virtues, and to provide for them innocent and inſtructive entertainment. Nor ſhould his method of doing it paſs unnoticed, as he employed the learned about him to give the general ſenſe of an author, and then gave it a dreſs beſt adapted to the taſte and to the apprehenſions of the public.

Nor did he confine his ſubjects to his own times, but in moſt of his undertakings extended his views to the welfare of poſterity: beſides the ſchools erected by him in different places, he prohibited any one from aſſuming the truſt and dignity of a magiſtrate who was not verſed in learning; and, that there might not be wanting a ſupply of men qualified to diſcharge the ſeveral offices of government, he compelled, by law, thoſe who had competent fortunes to give their children a proper education.

Univerſity of Oxford founded by King Alfred.

One principal object which ſhewed his regard to learning, and has rendered his name peculiarly illuſtrious, was his being the FOUNDER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD. We ſay the founder, though we are not inſenſible that ſome writers have contended for a higher antiquity, but, we think, not ſupported by ſufficient authority.

Alfred erected three halls, in each of which twenty-ſix ſcholars were educated. The ſciences taught were divinity, logic, muſic, geometry, aſtronomy, grammar, and rhetoric; and the ableſt men of the age were appointed the teachers. Such was the beginning of Oxford as a ſeat of letters, and the reſidence of the muſes; and ſince that time it hath riſen to its utmoſt degree of ſplendor, and has become the largeſt univerſity in the world: it has no equal for the number and magnificence of its colleges and public buildings, the ſize and value of its libraries, the multitude of its profeſſors and pupils, and the variety of its endowments. It hath produced perſons eminent in all branches of literature;

terature; claſſical and polite learning have appeared in it with peculiar luſtre; and it continues the habitation of ſubſtantial knowledge, true taſte, and national inſtruction.

Alfred ſhines with equal, perhaps with greater glory as a legiſlator, than he doth as the friend and patron of letters in general; and not one of our Engliſh princes deſerve to be named with him in this reſpect: for, in order to provide for his ſubjects a full body of laws, he ſearched into the inſtitutions of foreign nations, collected the regulations of the Britiſh Kings, and of his Saxon anceſtors, and drew from them what was moſt valuable and uſeful. It is much to be lamented that the code eſtabliſhed by him has not been tranſmitted to us entire; but enough of it remains to fill us with the warmeſt veneration for his memory, and to convince us that he had the nobleſt views for the happineſs of poſterity, as well as of his own times; and the natives of this iſland muſt owe him peculiar eſteem, ſince to him we are indebted for many of the moſt important privileges which, at the preſent day, conſtitutes the dignity and felicity of our political conſtitution *.

Moreover, with relation to his ſkill in the arts, and his attention to commerce, he was ſuperior to any monarch of the age: he erected cities, repaired palaces, and applied himſelf diligently to the ſtudy of ſhip-building, ſo as to reduce it to a ſcience, and invented veſſels of ſuch a conſtruction as enabled him to obtain the victory in ſeveral engagements with the Danes. From a motive of piety, and to relieve the Chriſtians of Malabar, he ſent perſons to the Eaſt-Indies, and his ſhips returned home with precious ſtones, perfumes, and other valuable commodities. It is likewiſe a certain fact, that he attempted the diſcovery of a north-eaſt paſſage, and employed *Octhar*, a Dane, and *Wolſtan*, an Engliſhman, for that purpoſe.

* Library, p. 183. Rapin's Hiſt. vol. I. p. 14.

If

If we conſider the religion of Alfred, though no doubt it partook of the temper of the times, yet we have no reaſon to believe that it was remarkably ſuperſtitious: there is nothing recorded of him which ſavours of the mean and monkiſh ſpirit obſervable in many preceding and ſucceeding princes; his piety was ever ſincere and fervent, and as rational as the period in which he lived would admit.

In *Alfred* we may behold what amazing effects may be produced by the genius and abilities of one man. Such was the influence he had upon the nation, that, in a few years, it was transformed into quite another people: the Engliſh, from being cowardly, poor, deſpicable, and ignorant, became brave, rich, reſpectable, and, comparatively ſpeaking, knowing and polite; but they were governed by a prince who was almoſt a prodigy in every reſpect, and we muſt travel through ſeveral centuries before we ſhall find a character on which we can expatiate with equal pleaſure, and which does ſo much honour to human nature.

Though Alfred was a prodigy, yet his own improvements were much limited by the ignorance of the age; and he muſt neceſſarily be unacquainted with a thouſand things that are at preſent known by perſons of very moderate capacities. This too was the caſe with regard to the profeſſors and tutors appointed by him at Oxford and other places; they had not accurate and extenſive views of any ſcience, and therefore could not communicate ſuch views to their diſciples. Indeed it was not poſſible, in ſo dark a period, to make a large progreſs in philoſophy and ſound learning; the ſtate of religion, the prevailing manners of the world, the want of good examples, all ſtood in oppoſition to the advancement of real wiſdom: add to this, that the repeated invaſions of the Danes put a ſtop to the cultivation of knowledge, and at length brought back an univerſal barbariſm. This great prince died in the fifty-ſecond year of his age, October 26, A. D. 900.

As

As it would exceed the limits of this work to give a detail of the civil and eccleſiaſtical laws of this prince, the curious reader may refer to Collier's Eccleſ. Hiſt. Vol. I. book. iii. p. 163 to 169.

EDWARD, A. D. 900.

Edward, *Alfred*'s ſucceſſor, imitated the virtues of his father in a number of benefactions to the church; yet his reign is remarkable for a very particular exertion of the authority of the Roman ſee. Pope Formoſus being informed that the biſhopric of Weſſex had been many years vacant, ſent over a bull, excommunicating the King, and all his ſubjects; which being publickly read at a general aſſembly of the ſtates, by Plegmund, archbiſhop of Canterbury, the vacant ſees were immediately filled, and three new biſhoprics erected in Weſſex: then Plegmund ſet out for Rome, where the ſentence was revoked, and, at his return to England, he conſecrated ſeven prelates in one day.

But notwithſtanding this inſtance of weakneſs, all hiſtorians agree in beſtowing high encomiums upon EDWARD, and in repreſenting him as not much inferior to his father. It is, however, but little which is ſaid of his literary character; though enough to convince us that he was a man of abilities and underſtanding. Perhaps we may conſider as ſome proof of it, an uſeful and remarkable regulation he made, that if a ſervant was guilty of theft, the perſon who recommended him ſhould be anſwerable for his crime, and reſponſible for his right behaviour. We read alſo, that Edward was particularly careful in the education of his children: that, in conſequence of his attention in this reſpect, they were diſtinguiſhed by their improvements; and that his daughters were ſo celebrated for their accompliſhments, as to be ſought after, and obtained in marriage, by the greateſt foreign princes, kings, and emperors.

But

But the grand point which intitles him to a place in the hiſtory of letters, is his being generally looked upon as the founder of the univerſity of Cambridge. The fact, however, like other ancient facts, is not ſo clear as to be wholly free from diſpute; while ſome go back to the fabulous ages, for the original of this famous ſeminary; and ſome contend that it had no exiſtence as a ſchool of learning, till the year 1110, in the reign of Henry I. But, without entering into theſe controverſies, we ſhall only embrace the preſent opportunity of obſerving, that, from ſmall beginnings, Cambridge is become, in a courſe of time, exceedingly illuſtrious, and, in rank, the ſecond univerſity in the world. Inferior to Oxford in magnitude, beauty, the number of colleges, buildings, profeſſors, and ſtudents, it is, notwithſtanding, capable of boaſting many noble edifices and foundations. But though Cambridge muſt yield the palm, in theſe reſpects, to her ſiſter, we ſuppoſe ſhe will be unwilling to do it in the valuable attainments of ſcience and literature. She, as well as Oxford, hath produced a number of eminent men, ſeveral of whom we ſhall have occaſion to mention in the courſe of our work; not, indeed, as members of a ſingle ſeminary, but as the ornaments of their country, and the glory of human nature. It has often been ſaid, that Oxford has excelled in the knowledge of the claſſics, belles lettres, and the languages; while Cambridge hath made a ſuperior progreſs in philoſophy, mathematics, and the ſeverer ſtudies. Nevertheleſs, it muſt be granted, that ſhe has always edu..ted many perſons who have been celebrated for their taſte in polite learning; and can, at this day, triumph in her Hurds, her Maſons, and her Greys. For our part, we ſincerely wiſh proſperity to both, and heartily pray there may never be any other contention between them, than who ſhall form the greateſt number of characters that will be an honour to religion, to letters, and to the public.

ATHEL-

ATHELSTAN, A. D. 925.

After the death of King Edward, his eldeſt ſon ATHELSTAN was crowned at Kingſton upon Thames, by Athelm, archbiſhop of Canterbury. This ceremony of crowning and anointing the Engliſh Kings by ſome prelate was, according to Malmeſbury, firſt uſed in the reign of King Alfred. Athelſtan ſoon after his coronation began to enter upon action, and ſhewed himſelf ſuch an enterpriſing and ſucceſsful prince, as gave great terror to many of his enemies, and to be eſteemed and careſſed by foreigners, acquired ſome very advantageous alliances, procured honourable matches for his ſiſters; nay exceeded the bounds of the Engliſh limits, for he obliged the Kings of Scotland and Wales to reſign their crowns to him; which he ſoon after, as a prince of generoſity, reſtored to them, upon doing him homage. Thus in civil affairs he gained applauſe; but all the glory of his atchievements was eclipſed by one act of inhumanity towards his brother Edwin; who being accuſed of diſaffection to his Majeſty, he too eaſily gave credit to it, baniſhed his brother, with circumſtances of cruelty highly aggravating, by putting him into a ſhip with only one ſervant, without rigging or crew to ſail the veſſel; and was driven by a ſtorm, which ſoon after befel him, to ſuch great diſtreſs, that he threw himſelf into the ſea. This precipitate act of Athelſtan ſoon after ſtung him with great remorſe, ſo that to ſilence the accuſations of his conſcience, he executed the perſon who informed him againſt his brother, and ſubmitted himſelf to ſeven years penance.

But nevertheleſs Athelſtan is confeſſed to have been a very illuſtrious and accompliſhed prince, and is juſtly ranked among the lawgivers of England. His eloquence is, likewiſe, highly extolled by hiſtorians, who have been pleaſed to aſſert that he was equal, in this reſpect, to the Roman orators. There

was

was a regulation made during this reign, that ſhews an enlargement of mind much above the times, and which even more civilized ages have not been able to reach: it was, that a merchant who had effected three voyages to the Streights, on his own account, ſhould be put on a footing with a gentleman. There is one fact related concerning Athelſtan, which, if ſufficiently authentical, would appear of peculiar importance in a ſurvey of literature. We are confidently told by ſeveral modern writers, that he ordered the Bible to be tranſlated out of the Hebrew into the Saxon language, for the benefit of his ſubjects. If this be true, it was a work of the utmoſt uſefulneſs and value, and ſhews the inſtitutions of Alfred to have produced very happy effects. But, notwithſtanding the improvements introduced by that prince, it is much to be queſtioned whether there were any perſons in the kingdom capable of executing ſo grand a deſign; for, in the period we are ſpeaking of, the beſt ſcholars Europe afforded ſeem to have been totally unacquainted with the oriental tongues.

There were ſeveral ſynods, or rather mixed conventions of church and ſtate held in this prince's reign. Sir Henry Spelman mentions four, but the moſt conſiderable was the ſynod at Graetly, A. D. 928. The principal conſtitutions of which were,

Firſt, To enjoin the payment of tythes, both perſonal and prædial; and requiring the biſhops and others of the clergy to ſet a good example. The ſecond, for preſcribing acts of charity. The third, regulates ſome proceedings in law, againſt ſacrilege, idolatrous ſacrifices, witchcraft, robberies, &c. The fourth and fifth, for aſcertaining the value of coins, and preſerving one fixed ſtandard. The ſixth, prohibits buying and ſelling on Sundays. The ſeventh, preſcribes ſundry penalties againſt perjury, as that the perjured perſon ſhould never more give evidence, nor be buried in conſecrated ground, unleſs ſevere penance be per-

performed. By the ſeventh, the ſtandard of weights and meaſures were to be regulated by the biſhops ſtandard; magiſtrates are enjoined to preſerve peace, and to exerciſe lenity and forbearance towards ſervants.

By the preamble of theſe conſtitutions it appears that the legiſlature in civil matters lay wholly on the King, and that the biſhops and other great men were convened for their advice, and not to give any force or authority to the laws. But it is a ſad inſtance of the deficiency in their laws, and of the weakneſs of the legiſlature, that the fine for killing men was according to their rank; thus that of a duke was valued at 3000 thrimſa's *, a biſhop or earl 8000, a prieſt 2000, and of a peaſant 30 thrimſa's, or at moſt but 100 ſhillings. Athelſtan, however, made ſome very good laws, for the encouragement of a foreign trade, and died at Glouceſter, A. D. 940.

From the days of Athelſtan, down to the conqueſt, the ſtate of knowledge evidently went backward, and the nation ſunk into the depth of ignorance and ſuperſtition. Europe in general, during the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, was over-run with ignorance and barbarity; and England, if poſſible, was ſtill in a worſe condition. It is really painful to reflect, that, in the courſe of ſeveral hundred years, we meet with little worthy to be recorded. Like travellers in the deſerts of Arabia, we often ſee nothing for a long time together, but barren ſands; and if now and then we come to a verdant ſpot, though that ſpot is extremely beautiful, compared with the dreary proſpect around it, yet it partakes of the ſterility of the ſoil by which it is encompaſſed.

The diſputes that agitated the world were of too low and trifling a nature to merit a place in our work. The inſolent and fiery Dunſtan occaſioned much buſtle about the celibacy of the clergy; and how little they were engaged in literary purſuits, appears from a

* Thrimſa, a piece of the value of three ſhillings.

canon, enjoining every prieſt to learn ſome occupation as a handicraftſman; a regulation which, as circumſtances ſtood, might be exceedingly proper and reaſonable. Another decree preſcribes, that they ſhall be capable of repeating the Creed and the *Pater noſter*. In the reign, however, of Ethelred II. it is ſaid, a miſſion was ſent to Norway, at the requeſt of the King of that country, to convert the Norwegians and the Swedes to the Chriſtian religion. The archbiſhop of York and other divines went over upon this occaſion, and had great ſucceſs, though ſome of them afterwards received the crown of martyrdom. What their real qualifications were, and what influence they had, we are not able to ſay; but may be well aſſured their inſtructions were tinctured with the defects of the times.

While ſo much darkneſs prevailed in the kingdom, and every thing was gradually giving way to the pretenſions of the Roman ſee, it ought not to be omitted, that the church of England had not as yet embraced the abſurd and monſtrous doctrine of tranſubſtantiation. This is evident from ſeveral teſtimonies, and particularly from the writings of Alfric, who is the ſole perſon that deſerves to be mentioned for more than a century; and who is alſo remarkable for having drawn up a ſet of homilies for the uſe of the clergy, now ſo generally and totally ignorant, as to be utterly incapable of compoſing diſcourſes for the benefit of their people. With reſpect, likewiſe, to the princes who ſucceeded Athelſtan, we meet with nothing but the reduction of the ſeveral Saxon ſtatutes and cuſtoms into one body, by Edward the Confeſſor; and an inſtitution of the ſame monarch, that ſtudious men ſhould be ſecure in their eſtates and properties: an inſtitution which contributed very little to the advancement of literature.

EDMUND,

EDMUND, A. D. 941.

Edmund ſucceeded Athelſtan, when he was but eighteen years of age. The Northumbrians, perhaps deſpiſing this prince's youth, broke their articles made with Athelſtan, and notwithſtanding the mediation made uſe of to reconcile the difference, Edmund was obliged to vindicate his right by the ſword, and in the year 944 obtained a compleat victory over the Northumbrians, and ſo far conquered the country as to annex it to his crown; the next year he gave Cumberland to Malcolm King of the Scots upon the terms of homage, and that he ſhould aſſiſt him in the field, when occaſion required.

The ſame year Dunſtan, who was preferred to the abbey of Glaſtonbury, publiſhed his book of Conſtitutions, divided into ten chapters, relating to the government and diſcipline of the church, as well clergy as laity *, which for the moſt part are an illuſtration of thoſe compiled and publiſhed by Athelſtan, and ſome former princes, with ſome additional injunctions about faſting and giving of alms, the due obſervation of Lent, paying of tithes, &c.

Synod at London, A.D. 944.

In the reign of Edmund a great ſynod was convoked at London, in which the biſhops were enjoined to repair their churches, and the King required to eſtabliſh funds for their ſupport. In the courſe of the following year, another aſſembly enacted conſtitutions for the advancement of the Chriſtian religion, and the maintainance of concord among the people. Here alſo churches and royal palaces were made places of ſanctuary; and it was ordained, that no mulct for breaking the peace, or ſatisfaction for murder, ſhould be accepted. About this period the famous Dunſtan began to ſignalize himſelf in the church and ſtate. He

* See Collier's Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. I. book iii p. 179.

was by birth a West-Saxon, descended of a noble family, and educated at Glastonbury, under a learned Irish monk, who instructed youth in that monastery. Having made extraordinary progress in his studies, he was recommended by Adhelm, archbishop of Canterbury, to King Athelstan, who took him under his protection; but no sooner perceiving his ambitious views, and meddling disposition, than he discarded him from his court. It was then that Dunstan retired in disgust from the world, and conceived that affection for the monks which he so cordially expressed in the whole course of his future greatness. Edmund, at his accession to the throne, invited him from his retreat, and made him his confessor; but he was for some misdemeanor dismissed from this office, which, however, he regained by dint of interest, and acquired amazing influence under this monarch and his brother Edred. This monastic life was at the same time dignified by an illustrious member in the person of Turketyl, who was an excellent soldier and sound politician, and quitted the office of chancellor to embrace the life of a recluse, at Croyland, of which he was made abbot, after having received the habit, together with the episcopal benediction and pastoral staff. He was no sooner established in the ecclesiastical office, than he resigned the monastery, with all its deeds, to Edred, who afterwards restored them to Turketyl and his monks, in a full assembly of the states at London, whom he exempted from all service and incumbrances, and confirmed all the former privileges of the monastery, except that of its being a sanctuary, which the abbot wisely refused.

Edred, A. D. 948.

Edred, brother to Edmund, and third son to Edward the Elder, succeeded to the crown. This was an interruption to the right line, for the late King left two sons, Edwy and Edgar; but being both very young,

young, they were ſet aſide, and Edred being likewiſe a good benefactor to the monks, the crown was given to him without much oppoſition, and he was crowned by Odo, archbiſhop of Canterbury. Edred is deſcribed as a prince of great courage and enterprize: in the firſt year of his reign he reduced the Northumbrians, who had revolted; his next expedition was againſt the Scots, whom he brought to terms merely by the terror of his arms.

With regard to religion, Edred's conſcience was in a manner governed by Dunſtan, inſomuch that he ſubmitted to great auſterities at his direction, and was ſent for as his confeſſor, in his laſt illneſs, to give him abſolution. He died A. D. 955.

He is ſaid to be the firſt of all the Saxon monarchs who aſſumed the title of King of Great Britain, a circumſtance that favours the opinion of thoſe who affirm that the King of Scotland held his crown as a fief depending upon England. Though Edred had two ſons, Edwy, ſon of Edmund, ſucceeded to the crown: the elective power was, in all probability, a privilege which they retained when they firſt ſubmitted to monarchical government, and a wiſe precaution to prevent the miſchiefs that attend the adminiſtration of an infant King *.

EDWY, A. D. 955.

Edwy was elected King by the ſuffrages of the clergy and nobility. This young monarch was ſo remarkably handſome, that he acquired the ſurname of *Pancalus*, or, the Fair, and at his acceſſion was ſo much in favour with Odo, archbiſhop of Canterbury, that he crowned him with his own hands at Kingſton. The King had married a very beautiful lady, named Ælgivia; but the match was ſo contrary to the opinion of the biſhops and nobles, as gave riſe to a ſeries of troubles, and his fondneſs for her

* Smollet, vol. I. p. 289.

greatly weakened the authority of the bishops over him; for after dinner, on the day of his coronation, Edwy withdrew to an apartment where his wife was, which gave great offence to the bishops and the nobility, and the archbishop commanded him to be fetched back again, and, though every body else refused, Dunstan was ready enough to obey Odo's order, who, reproaching him for his fondness, dragged him to his company. Such an outrage could not fail to excite the resentment of the young monarch and the King's friends, who were offended at the overbearing pride of the abbot; and soon after Edwy demanded a restitution of the sums which Edred had committed to his charge, and strongly insinuated that he had embezzled the public money. Dunstan haughtily answered, that the money had been applied to pious uses by the late King's express orders; which tho', by his artful answer, for the present stopt any further proceedings, Dunstan was soon after banished the kingdom, and returned to Flanders.

Odo, the archbishop, thinking the dignity of the priesthood degraded by the exile of Dunstan, fomented a disaffection: the Mercians and Northumbrians entered into measures with the archbishop; they rebelled, set up Edwy's younger brother Edgar, a boy of thirteen years of age, for their King, who recalled Dunstan, and immediately ordained him a bishop, to give him a seat in that assembly, who made it their business to gloss over this opposition, or rebellion, with the name of religion, for which many pretended miracles were attested to support their unwarrantable proceedings. I mention these instances, though a digression, to shew what exorbitant power and influence the bishops had acquired at that time; so that some historians speak of him as having, by his imprudent measures, forfeited his crown and his happiness; and that if he had been less resolute, he might have soothed his enemies. If he had been more resolute,

lute, he might have put it out of their power to hurt him. Edwy dying, though not without ſuſpicion of being murdered, Edgar ſucceeded to the crown.

EDGAR, A. D. 959.

Edwy dying without iſſue, the whole kingdom was reunited under Edgar, who, though in the prime of his youth, had already given undeniable proofs of a ſhining genius, and the moſt ſolid underſtanding. He had manifeſted his ability in making himſelf maſter of a part of his brother's dominions; and he afterwards demonſtrated the extenſiveneſs of his capacity, by keeping his ſubjects in ſubmiſſion, and his enemies in fear, without ſtraining the regal authority, or engaging in any martial enterprize: but he awed his neighbours by taking ſuch meaſures, for the defence of his kingdom, as diſabled them from invading it with any proſpect of ſucceſs. He divided Northumberland into two governments, and conſtantly maintained a ſtrong body of forces in the northern provinces, that they might be at hand to quell any inſurrection that ſhould happen among the turbulent people; and in order to ſecure his dominions from the diſcontents of foreign Danes, he equipped a very ſtrong fleet, amounting to two thouſand five hundred veſſels, divided into different ſquadrons, and ſtationed in ſuch a manner that they were continually cruiſing round the iſland, which was thus effectually covered from inſult. Such wiſe precautions could not fail to eſtabliſh peace and tranquillity among his people, which, in order to fix beyond any probability of interruption, he engaged Kennett, King of Scotland, in his intereſt, by ceding to him the whole county of Lothian, extending from the Tweed to the Forth, for which, and the northern counties already beſtowed upon Malcolm, that prince certainly did homage. It was, in all probability, owing to this ceſſion and treaty, which ſecured the Scottiſh King as an ally, that Maccuſe, King of Man and

the isles, some monarchs of Galloway, and the Prince of Wales, submitted so peaceably to the government of Edgar.

The next year Edgar, being at Chester, summoned all the tributary knights to attend him at that place, who rowed his barge down the river Dee, in his way to the monastery of St. John the Baptist, while he himself sat at the helm. Smollet considers this circumstance as no more than a compliment, or frolic, acted in an excursion of pleasure; when it is evident, from the King's behaviour, that it was a real act of homage: nor can his remark, that his successors might justly boast of themselves to be Kings of England, when attended in that manner, be understood in any other light.

Edgar did not think it sufficient to protect England from the insults of foreigners, but he turned his thoughts to some regulations that were necessary in the state, and then in the church. The first was in respect to the magistrates, of whom there was a general complaint; and that he might the better effect his purpose, he every year made a visit to some part of his kingdom, to have the best accounts he could obtain of the conduct of his judges, &c.; and to remove the abuses complained of, he enacted, that every magistrate, convicted of giving a sentence contrary to law, if through ignorance, should be fined one hundred and twenty shillings; but if knowingly, should be turned out, and rendered incapable of acting for the future. We must acknowledge this care worthy of a prince, as it was a proper expedient for restoring such a regard to justice as is the security of the rights of subjects, and the authority of government*.

Another wise regulation was, the reducing all weights and measures to one standard: this he found necessary to support the credit of the kingdom in foreign markets, in which respect he acquired the praises

* Rapin, vol. I. p. 127.

bestowed

beſtowed on him by ancient hiſtorians: nay, we may go further; we may boldly ſay, that he ſurpaſſed them, inaſmuch as they obtained their fame by acts of rapine, and the deſtruction of their ſpecies; whereas Edgar's fame was built upon a noble foundation, that of juſtice and benevolence †.

But, beſides every inſtance of his great wiſdom in regard to civil affairs, he appears to be piouſly diſpoſed: it is ſaid he founded forty monaſteries; that he repaired and embelliſhed a great number, among others that of Glaſton, founded by Edred his uncle. Ingulphus, in his hiſtory of Croyland, ſays the treaſure of that monaſtery, in the reign of Edgar, amounted to no leſs than ten thouſand pounds, beſides the veſſels, ſhrines, and other things. Edgar not only enriched the monaſteries, but undertook to eſtabliſh the monks a ſecond time in the poſſeſſion of eccleſiaſtical benefices, which he performed with a high hand. This was ſaid to be effected principally at the perſuaſion of Dunſtan, whom Edgar had made archbiſhop of Canterbury; and it is highly probable that Edgar himſelf thought he did a ſignal ſervice to the church by putting it under the direction of monks. Dunſtan, in conjunction with him, profeſſed to bring about a reformation in the inferior clergy; for this purpoſe a council was convened, and Edgar himſelf was preſent. At this council, the ſpeech he made plainly ſhews how much he was biaſſed in favour of the monks, and diſcovered his great diſlike of the ſecular clergy, on account of their immoralities. However, as it appears to flow from ſentiments of piety, and is one of the moſt remarkable tranſactions of his reign, though it cannot find place in this hiſtory, we refer the reader to Rapin's hiſtory *.

We cannot wholly omit ſome of the principal canons of that convention. They confirm the civil privileges and immunities of the church; preſcribe the religious

† Rider, vol. I. p. 33. * Vol. I. b. iv. p. 129.

obſervation

obſervation of the Lord's day; enjoin the clergy to attend conſtantly at their devotion; forbid the prieſts changing their cures. It enjoins every prieſt to learn ſome employment, to prevent indigence in caſe of misfortune; it ſtrictly requires parents to inſtruct their children in the Chriſtian faith; orders that no perſons be buried in a church, excepting perſons of known probity; forbids the eating of blood: laſtly, the prieſt is to preſs the people, under his cure, to confeſſion, penance, and ſatisfaction; laſtly, to the uſe of oil in baptiſm, and for the anointing of the ſick *.

After theſe canons there follows a form of confeſſion, wherein are directions for the confeſſarians; and here the prieſts are obliged to a thorough examination of the penitent, and the penance to be proportioned to the nature and degree of the crime, and the condition, temper, age, and capacity of the perſon. And in caſe of infirmity, or weakneſs of conſtitution, the rigour of faſting was to be diſpenſed with. And it is ſomewhat remarkable, that where the *Pater noſter* is enjoined to be ſaid threeſcore times a day, there is not the leaſt mention of one *Ave Maria*, which is an argument that the modern applications to the Bleſſed Virgin were unpractiſed by the church.

A controverſy aroſe, between the monks and the ſecular clergy, about the lawfulneſs of prieſts marrying, in which both parties appeared in earneſt, and produced perhaps the beſt arguments on each ſide, but concluſive in the affirmative; which we may ſee, with a variety of teſtimonies, in Collier's hiſtory before cited.

Edward *the* Martyr, A. D. 975.

Immediately after the deceaſe of Edgar, Elfser, Duke of Mercia, ſworn enemy to the monks, expelled them from all the benefices in his country, which he filled again with ſecular prieſts. Some other noblemen followed his example in different parts of the

* Collier's Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. I. b. xi. p. 187.

kingdom;

kingdom; but the Duke of Eaſt-Anglia, and many other perſons of the firſt rank, adhered to Dunſtan and his party, which was likewiſe eſpouſed by almoſt the whole body of the commons, who looked upon that prelate as a ſaint and an apoſtle. This diverſity of ſentiments produced a conteſt concerning the ſucceſſion. Elfrida, their queen-dowager, a woman of an ambitious ſpirit, had, by her emiſſaries, circulated ſome doubts about the validity of Edgar's marriage with the mother of Edward, in hopes of raiſing her own ſon, Ethelred, to the throne; and as the other was ſupported by Dunſtan, all that prelate's enemies declared for the ſon of Elfrida. Though by theſe means there was a very powerful faction formed in his favour, the archbiſhop, confiding in his great popularity, aroſe from the aſſembly of the ſtates, while they were deliberating upon the choice of a ſucceſſor to Edgar, and taking prince Edward by the hand, conducted him to the church, where he was anointed and conſecrated, in the twelfth year of his age, amidſt a vaſt concourſe of people, who teſtified their joy in loud acclamations.

Whatever inclinations the oppoſite party felt to controvert this irregular way of proceeding, they would not run the riſk of diſobliging the multitude, but left Edward in quiet poſſeſſion of the throne; while his ſtepmother, Elfrida, retired to Corf-Caſtle, in Dorſetſhire, which was aſſigned her dowry, and there in ſecret hatched ſchemes for his deſtruction.

Dunſtan having thus ſecured the continuance of his own power, exerted all his endeavours to maintain the monks in the benefices they had acquired in the preceding reign, which he endeavoured to ſupport by pretended miracles.

Edward however called a ſynod at Ameſbury, in Wiltſhire, in which ſeveral canons were made with a deſign to bring the province to a nearer conformity with the Roman church. Beſides theſe eccleſiaſtical affairs,

affairs, no tranſaction of conſequence diſtinguiſhed the reign of Edward, which laſted but four years, and was concluded in a very tragical manner. The King returning one day from the chace in Dorſetſhire, rode up to the gate of Corf-Caſtle, to pay a compliment to his ſtep-mother Elfrida, who invited him to alight; but being in a hurry to be gone, ſhe prevailed with him to drink a glaſs of wine on horſeback, and while he was ſwallowing the liquor was ſtabbed in the back by one of her domeſtics.

Ethelred II. A. D. 978.

Such was the diſpoſition and inexperience of this prince, that we find the reins of government were greatly relaxed, and all the neceſſary precautions for the ſecurity of the kingdom entirely neglected: the principal nobility who had been entruſted with the government of different counties, perpetuated the adminiſtration in their families, aſſumed the name of dukes, exerciſed an independent authority in their own diſtricts, and diſregarded that union, upon which alone the ſafety and welfare of the nation could depend. The Danes took advantage of it to renew their depredations on the kingdom, and Ethelred ſeeing his realm reduced to a miſerable ſituation, obeyed the dictates of his fears and deſpondence, and ſubmitted to pay thirty thouſand pounds to thoſe invaders; upon which many of the Danes retired to their own country. But a good number of them choſe to fix their habitation in England; where being ſupported by the natives of the ſame race, they became extremely inſolent and oppreſſive. In ſhort, we find nothing intereſting in the reign of this prince of a civil or religious nature; for at the beginning of it he found a rich and flouriſhing kingdom, which he left in extreme poverty. He died after a ſhort illneſs, in the thirty-ſeventh year of his reign, A. D. 1016.

Edmund,

EDMUND II. *ſurnamed* Ironſide, A. D. 1016.

On the death of Ethelred, the citizens of London immediately proclaimed Edmund, his eldeſt ſon, by Ethelgiva, his firſt wife. This young prince was of a conſtitution ſo remarkably ſtrong, that he acquired the ſurname of Ironſide. The many ſignal proofs of his courage and conduct contributed to his election at this juncture. And Livignus, archbiſhop of Canterbury, crowned him ſoon after. But the reſt of the biſhops and nobility being ſummoned by Canute to Southampton, declared for him, and ſolemnly renounced the race of Ethelred. After the Dane had taken an oath, that he would govern them faithfully in matters, both ſecular and religious, after many conteſts and ſtruggles for the crown, Edmund was induced to open a conference on the ſubject of peace, in order to prevent any farther effuſion of blood. This propoſal being eagerly embraced by both parties, a treaty was concluded, in which this kingdom was divided between the two competitors; all the country to the ſouth of the Thames and part of Weſſex was aſſigned to Edmund, and all the reſt of the iſland ceded to Canute. After the ratification of the treaty, by the perfidy of Edric, or ſome other perſon, in which hiſtorians are not agreed, Edmund was aſſaſſinated before he had opportunity to diſplay his virtues. However, he appears to have been a perſon of ſtrict juſtice, great benevolence, ſublime generoſity, intrepid courage, and invincible patience; though theſe virtues were obſcured by the weakneſs he ſhewed in admitting Edric into favour, notwithſtanding he had been the ruin of his father by his treachery.

CANUTE

CANUTE *the* GREAT, A. D. 1017.

As ſoon as Canute heard of the murder of Edmund, he convened a general council of all the nobility and clergy at London, in order to ſecure the ſucceſſion of the whole kingdom. When the aſſembly was met, he artfully availed himſelf of the laſt treaty he had made with the late King, and it was not without much difficulty he preſerved his kingly authority. We ſhall not enter upon the civil part of his hiſtory and character; it is acknowledged by ſome hiſtorians, that no King ever deſerved a more contradictory character, nor that any adminiſtration produced a greater variety of conduct: he diſcovered an ambition that regarded nothing but the accompliſhments of his wiſhes: even the acts of ſuperſtition, which he performed to atone for his former cruelties, may be ſuſpected to be incited by policy, and tinctured with ambition. The grandeur of his expedition to Rome, and the large ſums he expended there, may be charged with oſtentation, if not with profuſion. Yet, with all his faults, it muſt be confeſſed he was poſſeſſed of great virtues, and was certainly a perſon of great abilities. He ſeemed to have been well acquainted with mankind, and able to turn the various diſpoſitions of his ſubjects to his advantage. Scarce any monarch ever raiſed popular odium ſo high, or allayed it ſo effectually as Canute; but in the latter part of his reign he paid a much greater regard to the intereſt and to the eſteem of his ſubjects. The variety of his victories did not ſo entitle him to the epithet of Great, as the virtues which he practiſed during the peaceable interval of his adminiſtration. It was in that period that he manifeſted his piety, his charity, and his equity: his continence was great, his addreſs engaging, his affability remarkable, his mercy extenſive: his love of peace manifeſted itſelf in his encouragement of thoſe who were

were of a pacific diſpoſition, and his ſtrict regard to juſtice in his ſeverity to thoſe who were guilty of any acts of robbery or violence. The [redacted]der concern he had for the welfare and proſperity of the meaneſt of his ſubjects, is evident from many of his letters to his officers; and, during the calm of peace, he applied his thoughts to the ſublime ſtudy of legiſlation, and, by the number of his laws, ſeemed to have made it his ſtudy to leave no grievance without redreſs. For the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice, he ordered that no diſtinction ſhould be made between rich and poor, and recommends mercy in all deciſions; that no perſon ſhould be put to death for a ſmall offence; and in caſe any judge perverted judgment out of prejudice, or for the ſake of lucre, he was to be fined the value of his head*, and removed from his place. Perſons guilty of conſpiracy againſt the King were puniſhed with loſs of life; and the demoliſhing or burning houſes, theft, and murder, were declared to be ſuch offences for which no ſatisfaction could be made by way of mulct and compenſation. The regulations he preſcribed with reſpect to married perſons, were highly conducive to make that ſtate reſpectable, and to prevent incontinence.

The eccleſiaſtical laws, enacted by this monarch, are not leſs curious than the civil, and ſhew that he extended his concern, not only to the ſecular, but likewiſe to the ſpiritual welfare of his kingdom; and with this view he enacted, that no fairs, markets, or other ſecular affairs, ſhould be practiſed on the Lord's day. All Chriſtians were obliged to receive the euchariſt, or the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, three times a year. And in order to oblige his clergy to live ſuitable to their character, and to ſhew they were not exempted by their order from the civil juriſdiction, he enacted, that if a prieſt was guilty of murder, or

* This muſt relate to the different value ſet upon noblemen, prieſts, or peaſants.

any

any enormity, he ſhould be deprived of his order and dignity, in order to his receiving condign puniſhment. From this rude manuſcript of his laws we may be able to form a judgment of the character of this monarch, and to add ſome features to his portrait, which have been omitted by our predeceſſors *.

HAROLD, *ſurnamed* Harefoot, A. D. 1036.

Canute had, the year before his death, placed his ſon Hardicnute on the throne of Denmark, and his ſon Swein on that of Norway; but as the ſucceſſion to the crown of England was left undetermined, it was conteſted by ſeveral competitors; ſo that when the Engliſh prelates and nobility met for the election of a ſovereign, there appeared no leſs than three parties in the council; one of which was for Hardicnute, as a deſcendent from a more honourable mother; another for Harold, as being the elder brother; and a third for Ethelred's two ſons, at that time in Normandy. However, the Danes ſettled in London, &c. declared for Harold, and the diſpute was amicably adjuſted by a ſynod convened for that purpoſe at Oxford His character was ſo little known, or his virtues ſo few, that it would be endleſs to attempt a repreſentation of them. We find nothing in his reign adapted to the purpoſe of this hiſtory, and therefore our readers will excuſe our giving ſo conciſe an account of him.

HARDICNUTE, A. D. 1040.

Hardicnute being at Bruges, with a formidable fleet at the time of Harold's death, the Engliſh ſeemed reſolved to anticipate any meaſures he could take for the acquiſition of the crown. But theſe intenſions were ſoon fruſtrated; and he aſcended the throne, contrary

* See Rider's Hiſt. vol. II. p. 116, and Rapin's Hiſt. vol. I. p. 148.

to

to the general ſatisfaction of the nation. Some of his firſt actions after his coronation ſhew him to have been a man of ſtrong paſſions and keen reſentment, and the conſequent actions of his reign ſuch as deſerved cenſure rather than praiſe. He was certainly of an indolent temper, fond of indulging to eaſe and luxury; he kept a ſumptuous table, and oppreſſed his ſubjects by many unrighteous impoſitions. If he had any virtue to compenſate for his vices, it was that of filial duty towards his mother; however, he did not wear the crown long, for he died ſuddenly at a wedding, and it is ſaid through his intemperance.

EDWARD *the* Confeſſor, A. D. 1042.

The Engliſh had ſuffered ſo much from the Danes, during the reign of ſome late kings, that there was a general inſurrection, and they intended to drive all the Danes out of the kingdom; but at length a council was held at Gillingham for the election of a king; and Earl Godwin, a perſon of great influence, remembering his promiſe to Edward, took him along with him incog. to the meeting. After a long harrangue which the Earl made in favour of the prince, he raiſed him in the midſt of the aſſembly, ſaying at the ſame time, "Behold your King." The aſſembly being ſtaggered at ſo unexpected an event, after a ſhort pauſe, they agreed to elect Edward for their ſovereign; and, to give ſanction to their choice, Earl Godwin was the firſt who did him homage.

Edward, being thus ſettled upon his throne, could not help ſhewing the fondneſs he had contracted for the Norman cuſtoms; during his exile he invited over ſeveral of that nation, and behaved towards theſe foreigners with a partiality that gave great diſguſt to the Engliſh nobility: he even carried his regard to ſuch a height as was both impolitic and unjuſt; the moſt important fortreſſes, and the greateſt poſts in the

kingdom, were conferred on the Normans; and the ſee of Canterbury being vacant, it was filled by one Rodbert a monk; he ſoon poſſeſſed Edward with a high opinion of his capacity and integrity, and engroſſed his confidence. Godwin finding the ear of the King poſſeſſed by a foreigner, was apprehenſive that his maſter might be led to ſuch meaſures as were inconſiſtent with the good of the kingdom; he therefore endeavoured, but in vain, to remove the prelate from the place he held in the King's eſteem; but the King was not a little exaſperated at the conduct of Godwin. The Iriſh taking advantage of the unſettled ſtate of the nation, meditated a deſcent, which was attended with ſome dreadful conſequences. At length a council was convened, and Godwin and his ſons, who had fled to Ireland, and promoted the animoſity of the Iriſh, were nevertheleſs acquitted of every crime laid to their charge, reinſtated in their honours and preferments, and reſtored to the King's favour. Many other quarrels and conteſts took place in this King's reign, which being foreign to my deſign I ſhall omit. The King at length, worn out with years, and unable to perform the vow which he had made of going a pilgrimage to Rome, obtained the Pope's diſpenſation, on condition of his building the abbey of Weſtminſter. This noble ſtructure, which ſtill goes by the ſame name, was originally the temple of Apollo, and was by King Sebert turned into a Chriſtian church; during the devaſtations of the Danes, it was deſtroyed and laid in ruins, till Edward rebuilt it, for the reaſon already aſſigned. A general council of the nation was called to confirm the King's charter, who exempted it from all epiſcopal juriſdiction, and granted it the privilege of a ſanctuary. The dedication of this ſacred edifice engroſſed all Edward's thoughts, and the officiouſneſs he ſhewed on that occaſion very probably threw him into the fever, which was the occaſion of his death. The monks gave him the glorious

glorious titles of Saint and Confeſſor; but it would have been with much better grace, if his public or private virtues had ever been ſo conſpicuous as to deſerve them. The tranquillity of his reign was certainly remarkable, if we conſider the factions which ſubſiſted among his nobles; ſome have repreſented him as void of all paſſion, and attribute much to that evenneſs and ſerenity of temper; but they ſhould rather have ſaid he was void of all the ſocial affections; his treatment of his wife and mother would juſtify ſuch a charge, nay they even extort it. His chaſtity, which the monks have applauded ſo highly as to found his merits of being canonized thereupon, was it not owing to natural frigidity, is ſuch a violation of the marriage-vow as ought to tranſmit eternal infamy on his memory *. Though honoured with the title of ſaint, and ranked by the flattery of ſuperſtition among the martyrs, his irraſcibility and inexorable reſentment were ſhewn ſo flagrantly in the affair of Euſtace, and in his antipathy to Godwin's family, that it would be a ſtretch of equity to deem him inculpable. The numerous miracles he is ſaid to perform, deſerve to be ranked among the legendary accounts of papal heroes; nor do the pretended cures of the ſcrophulous humour, called the *King's evil*, by touching, which this King pretended to, in imitation of thoſe of France, deſerve more credit.

* Voltaire obſerves on this occaſion, that one of the great faults, or great misfortunes of this King, was his having no children by his wife, daughter to one of the moſt powerful noblemen of his kingdom: he hated his wife as well as his own mother, and for reaſons of ſtate had them both removed from court. However the barrenneſs of the marriage-bed proved the occaſion of his canonization, for it was pretended that he had made a vow of chaſtity; a raſh vow ſurely, for a married man, and highly abſurd for a King, who ſtood in need of an heir to his dominions; but by this vow, real or pretended, he forged new chains for his country." See Smollet's elegant tranſlation of Voltaire, vol. I. p. 268.

As his laws were looked upon by future Kings as the ſtandard of their conduct and adminiſtration, and made one of the articles of the coronation, it will not be improper to give a ſhort ſketch of them. All cauſes in which the church was concerned were to have the preference to any others, and every perſon who was a tenant to the church was obliged to bring his action in the eccleſiaſtical court. The clergy were likewiſe exempted from the civil juriſdiction; the privilege of ſanctuaries were confirmed, and no fugitive was allowed to be taken from thence, unleſs by the biſhop and his officers: every offence againſt the peace of the church was left to the cognization of the biſhop of the dioceſe in which it was committed, and the offender was obliged to give ſecurity, that he would make ſatisfaction to God, the King, and the church, within forty days, and in caſe he abſconded was to be outlawed; the payment of Rome Scot, and of ſmall tithe, he ſtrictly enjoined, and if refuſed, it was levied by the King's juſtice, becauſe it was the King's alms *; protection from arreſts on certain days, and in certain diſtricts, beſides thoſe which were granted a perſon under the King's own hand, were now confirmed. If any one was murdered, inqueſt was to be made after the criminal, in the village or town where the body was found; in caſe the murderer was diſcovered, he was to be delivered up to juſtice; in caſe he could not be immediately found, a month and a day was allowed for that purpoſe; and in caſe he was not found by that time, the town was obliged to pay forty-ſix marks, and if unable to pay that ſum, the fine was to be levied on the hundred, and the money was to be kept ſealed up for one year; and in caſe the mur-

* Tyrrel judiciouſly remarks, that we may from hence obſerve how much the Popiſh writers are miſtaken, who will needs make theſe Peter-pence to have been a tribute from the Kings of England to the Pope.

derer

derer was not diſcovered, ſix marks were to be paid to the relations of the deceaſed, and the other forty were to go to the King. Thoſe ſtatutes which more particularly concern the office and prerogative of the King, are compiled with great judgment. In deſcribing the office of a King, the ſtatute informs us he is the vicegerent of the ſupreme King, and is appointed to govern and defend this earthly kingdom, and the people of the Lord, and above all things ſhould reverence his holy church, and diſcourage all evil doers, which unleſs he do, he forfeits his title and dignity. The King had a prerogative to pardon life and loſs of member, on condition that the malefactor made the beſt ſatisfaction he could to the perſons injured. Every act of extortion and oppreſſion ſeemed peculiarly to demand this monarch's notice; he remitted the tax of Danegelt, and could not endure the collecting of taxations by exciſemen; nor were uſurers tolerated at that time in England.

This is a ſummary of the laws which Edward the Confeſſor collected from thoſe which had been enacted by former Kings, and afterwards enforced by William the Conqueror, of which we ſhall treat in its proper place.

HAROLD II. A. D. 1066.

Hiſtorians are much divided in their opinion as to the right of Harold to the crown, and the manner of his acceſſion to it. Harold had no legal claim to the crown by any hereditary right, nor, as we find, by the will of Edward. But without entering into the merits of the diſpute, Henry de Silgrave relates, that Harold came to Edward as he was lying on his death-bed, deſiring him to appoint a ſucceſſor; that he replied he had already nominated Duke William for his heir; but the Earl and his friends ſtill perſiſting in this requeſt, the King turning his face to the wall, replied, "When

I am dead, let the Engliſh make either the Duke or the Earl King *."

Harold however uſed his intereſt with ſuch dexterity, as to get himſelf crowned, and began his adminiſtration with many popular acts of government; he paid great deference to the clergy, without ſhutting his eyes to the irregularities of that order, ſeverely chaſtiſing the guilty, while he beſtowed marks of his favour upon the innocent, by confirming their charters and extending their immunities; he took the moſt effectual meaſures for the impartial adminiſtration of juſtice, ordered the laws to be revived and reformed, and examplary puniſhments to be inflicted on robbers and diſturbers of the public peace; and being alarmed with the news of the pretenſions of William Duke of Normandy to the crown, he fortified ſome of his territories and ports.

The Duke of Normandy, though well informed of all theſe popular tranſactions of Harold, would not deſiſt from his enterprize; and even ſent ambaſſadors to demand that Harold would relinquiſh the crown in his favour, and to denounce war in caſe of refuſal. To this peremptory demand Harold replied, that William had no ſort of right to the crown of England; for, granting that the late King had diſpoſed of it in his favour, ſuch a diſpoſition (if any ſuch there was) could not take place, inaſmuch as it was diametrically oppoſite to the laws of the kingdom; which reſtricted Kings from beſtowing their crowns according to their own caprice, eſpecially to ſtrangers. With reſpect to himſelf, he had been fairly elected by thoſe who had a right to confer the ſovereignty; nor could he yield the crown to any other, without betraying the confidence repoſed in him by his ſubjects; finally, he gave him to underſtand, that he knew how to defend his right

* This author wrote in the time of Edward I. his hiſtory is now in manuſcript in the Cottonian collection, marked Cleopatra, A12, cited by Ryder.

againſt

againſt any perſon by whom he ſhould be invaded: an anſwer, that referred the diſpute to the determination of war; for which both parties prepared with the utmoſt diligence.

William the Norman accordingly embarked at St. Valery towards the latter end of September, and after a ſhort paſſage landed at Pevenſey in Suſſex; after having refreſhed his men, he advanced along the ſea-ſide to Haſtings, where he ordered a fort to be built, and publiſhed a manifeſto. But though he pretended that he came to revenge the death of Alfred, reſtore the archbiſhop of Canterbury, aſſiſt the Engliſh in puniſhing Harold, who had ſeized the crown without having any right to it (but made no mention of Edward's will) theſe reaſons appeared ſo trifling, that no Engliſhman would inliſt under his banner; however, he forbad his people to ravage the country, or inſult the inhabitants, whom he was pleaſed to term his ſubjects.

Harold was at York when he received the news of this invaſion, and forthwith began his march to London with the troops that had returned from the north; and whilſt he was in London, waiting for ſome troops that were on their march to join him, and receiving the profeſſions of the nobility in his favour, William ſent ambaſſadors to him with another threatening meſſage, which Harold retorted by another embaſſy of the ſame nature. Some propoſals were made for the battle being conducted by his brother Gurth. But Harold bravely replied in the negative, and that he would by his perſonal behaviour convince his ſubjects he was worthy of the crown they had ſet upon his head.

The Engliſh monarch having aſſembled all his forces, advanced againſt the Norman army, and encamped within ſeven miles of Haſtings, where they remained at ſome little diſtance from each other; and the Duke made ſome overtures, by one of his monks, to refer the diſpute to the determination of the Pope, to quit the

kingdom, if he would do him homage for the crown, or decide it by a ſingle combat. To theſe propoſitions Harold replied, that he was not ſo ſimple as to ſubmit to the arbitration of the Pope, who had already declared himſelf a party; that he ſcorned to hold the crown of England dependent on any prince whatſoever, nor would he put his kingdom on the iſſue of a ſingle combat, in which, though he ſhould obtain the victory, he could reap no ſolid advantage; he therefore told the meſſenger, God would next day decide between him and his adverſary.

The fatal day being come, the fourteenth of October, both armies appeared in array, each of them conſiſting of about ſixty thouſand, both commanded by men of intrepid valour; and ſeveral ſkirmiſhes happened that day, without any remarkable advantage gained on either ſide. William perceiving the night approaching, and unwilling to leave the battle undecided, made another deſperate effort to diſlodge the enemy; and in this attack Harold was ſhot dead with an arrow that pierced his brain.

Thus fell the brave, but unfortunate prince Harold II. with his ſword drawn in defence of Engliſh liberty, and was with his brother Gurth and Lewin ſent to their mother Githa, and were honourably interred in the abbey at Waltham, which Harold himſelf had founded.

Some hiſtorians have endeavoured to blacken Harold's character, particularly for ſuperſeding prince Edgar, who had the greateſt right to the throne. The impartial will, perhaps, acknowlege Harold would have been more worthy of the crown, had he been leſs anxious to obtain it; for while he was a private man, he won the love and eſteem of his fellow-ſubjects: nor could any action of his reign, which was not a year, forfeit that eſteem and affection, eſpecially as he had ſhewn a regard to the Britiſh liberties and intereſt by two battles, which he fought in a ſhort ſpace. By one

of

of them he obtained a ſignal victory over the Norwegians, and the unhappy iſſue of the laſt was never attributed to his want of courage or conduct. In fine, he was as far, perhaps as the nature and perplexity of his affairs permitted, well diſpoſed with reſpect to religion, always liberal to the church, and the friend of the clergy: but in the ſocial and relative virtues few exceeded him; he was humane, mild, affable, and generous, ſuch as made his character amiable, as a huſband, a parent, and a friend.

Thus ended the Anglo-Saxons ſovereignty in England; which Hengiſt, firſt King of Kent, began above 600 years before *.

As the *laws* and *conſtitution* of Great Britain owe their origin to the principal tranſactions and revolutions of the Saxon heptarchy, &c. the following review of the moſt intereſting periods relative hereto may not be unacceptable to the reader.

When the Picts and Scots had jointly invaded the Britons, who had not ſpirit to ſtand up in their own defence, but applied for aſſiſtance to the Saxons, who had rendered themſelves a formidable people, and took the Britons under their protection, only to gratify their ambition and increaſe their power and intereſt; the Saxons invaded Gaul, and eſtabliſhed the kingdom of France in 420; after which they came over to Britain, and founded the kingdom of England in 445.

When the Engliſh and French came from Germany to people Britain and Gaul, they tranſplanted with them the moderate ſway and liberty of the Germans. They were at this time Pagans; but they were ſoon converted to chriſtianity, and eſtabliſhed that excellent government, which, under ſeveral improvements, has been conveyed down to the preſent age: but they met with ſome difficulties in forming their ſettlements, nor could they find any footing, without firſt clearing their way, and driving the Britons up by themſelves into a

* Rapin's Hiſt. vol. I. p. 167.

corner

corner of the island, where they continued till the year 1212, before they were incorporated with England.

The Saxon form of government was rather aristocratical than monarchical; and they were distinguished into the three ranks of noblemen, freemen, and slaves. Hengist established the kingdom of Kent in 455; and the heptarchy, after some confusion, was formed in 582. These seven kingdoms were considered as one grand state or confederacy; and the command of their armies was given to one prince, chosen out of the rest, on whom some historians have peculiarly bestowed the title of monarch, as having the precedence and some superiority over the others. The Saxon revolution was entire, as far as it extended: they introduced their language with their government; and these together with their customs have descended to their posterity, increased by other engraftments on the original stock. Their *Wittenagemot* was like our parliament, of which it is the source, where they deliberated upon the common affairs of the seven kingdoms; and every kingdom was subject to the resolutions of the general assembly. But it is hard to trace how regularly they moved as to civil affairs, how closely they followed their country-customs, or where they innovated or varied from their German forms and policy. Some footsteps are however discoverable, which have remained to posterity; as the divisions of the country into hundreds; the appointing of sheriffs, and electing annual magistrates by the people; as also the jurisdiction and power of life and death by juries. The whole fabric of this government was solid and magnificent, equally conducive to the honour of the prince, and the security of the subjects: but it is in England only that this antient generous manly government of Europe survives, and continues in its original perfection.

After the formation of the heptarchy, the monarchs of the different kingdoms, each in their turn, aspired at the government of the whole, which occasioned

ſioned ſeveral wars among the Saxons, who freely ſhed their bloods, but carefully preſerved their liberties. It is remarkable, that the Saxons who ſettled in Britain acknowledged an hereditary right in the female line; while thoſe who ſettled in France, aboliſhed it there by the Salique law: but Pharamond ſubdued Gaul by conqueſt, and Hengiſt planted himſelf in Britain by policy.

The kingdom of the Weſt Saxons was the moſt conſiderable among the heptarchy, and was founded by Cerdic in 495. Sexburgha, an excellent princeſs, governed this kingdom in 672; and Ina began his reign in 690, who publiſhed a body of laws, intitled, *Weſt Saxon Lege*, or the laws of Weſt Saxons, whereby he diſtinguiſhed himſelf as the firſt Saxon prince, who regularly ſummoned a great council or parliament, to enact laws for the better government of his kingdom; for none of their Kings had the power of making laws, without the conſent of the general aſſembly of the nation, compoſed of the chief nobility. It then conſiſted of nine articles, and ſerved for the foundation of the laws publiſhed in the next century by Alfred. His ſucceſſor, Sigebert, ſhewed himſelf a tyrant; and he was dethroned by his ſubjects, who were a free people; while the Saxon heptarchy was ſoon after diſſolved, and the Engliſh monarchy founded by Egbert.

The great Egbert was of the blood royal of the line of Cerdic; but the crown was granted to him by the election of the people, who, in the language of the beſt hiſtorian, William of Malmeſbury, commanded him to reign in the year 800. He found the Saxon ſtrength was degenerated, and their common liberty endangered by the potency of Charlemagne, who had cauſed himſelf to be crowned Emperor of the Weſt. But in 829, Egbert became the ſole monarch of all the heptarchy, and was crowned King of Britain by the con-

* Rapin, vol. I. p. 175.

ſent

ſent of both clergy and laity, aſſembled in a general council at Wincheſter; after which all the Saxon kingdoms were ordered to paſs under the common name of England; and it is obſervable, that Egbert was not only the father of the Engliſh monarchy, but alſo the auguſt anceſtor in the female line of the illuſtrious houſe of Hanover.

About this time the Danes and Normans became terrible to England and France; nor were their depredations abated, till they made ſettlements in both countries: indeed they were another ſwarm of the old northern hive, and were only a remoter branch of the Saxons. The Danes were formidable at ſea, and the naval glory of the Saxons had ſubſided; but Alfred revived it in 882, and Edgar compleated it in 959; which for many years preſerved the liberty of England. Alfred was juſtly called the father of the Engliſh conſtitution; but he could not prevent the Danes from ſettling in his dominions, while he was forming the origin of thoſe laws which have preſerved the glory of England, and the liberties of Engliſhmen; beſides, he founded, or at leaſt greatly augmented, the univerſity of Oxford, and the ſciences flouriſhed under his protection.

The ſucceſſors of Alfred bravely oppoſed the incurſions of the Danes till the reign of Ethelred II. who gave his enemies an opportunity of rendering themſelves more formidable than ever; and notwithſtanding the bravery of his ſucceſſor Edmund Ironſide, the Danes ſucceeded in their attempts; for on his death Canute became the firſt Daniſh King of England in 1016.

The Daniſh conqueror governed England like a Saxon monarch: the Danes, in a courſe of two hundred years, had intermarried with the Engliſh families, and were ſo much incorporated as to become one people. The Saxon laws were confirmed, and the Danes ſubmitted to them. But the two ſucceeding monarchs behaved

haved like tyrants, which renewed the Engliſh ſpirit, and recovered the liberty of England; for the Saxon line was reſtored in 1041, in the perſon of Edward the Confeſſor, who reduced the Weſt Saxon, Mercian and Daniſh laws into one body, which are ſtill in force as the common law of the land.

Harold II. was an uſurper, but was deprived both of his crown and life by an invader. This was William the Conqueror, who defeated Harold in 1066, and aſcended the throne which he claimed by the teſtament of Edward the Confeſſor, without any mention of conqueſt, as he was conſcious that the Engliſh were tenacious of their liberty.

The Normans very probably had the ſame original with the Danes, and eſtabliſhed themſelves under Rollo, in 876, in that part of France to which he gave the name of Normandy. A potent kingdom was now enſlaved by a ſmall dukedom; for, after the battle of Haſtings, the Engliſh thought no more of ſtriving for their liberties, becauſe the Conqueror accepted the crown on the pretence of election, inſtead of aſſerting his right by conqueſt; he ſwore to obſerve the ancient laws of the kingdom, promiſed to protect the liberties of the people; but he ſoon attempted to make England a land of ſlavery, while the Engliſh poſſeſſions became the property of Normans, and a new race of people ſpread themſelves over the nations. William introduced the feodal law, and ſome Norman cuſtoms, which he engrafted on thoſe of the Saxons. The introduction of military tenures was a violent blow upon Engliſh liberty, and all public acts were made in the Norman tongue; ſo that England ſeemed as if ſhe was going to be deprived of every thing precious and valuable. But the union of the Norman and Saxon lines under Henry I. promiſed better days to England; for this prince, in 1100, confirmed his coronation-oath by his charter, which confined the royal authority within its ancient bounds, and

guarded

guarded the ſubjects from arbitrary power; beſides, he married the Princeſs Matilda, the niece of Edgar Atheling, who was the immediate heir of the line of Cerdic, whereby the Saxons and Normans conſidered themſelves only as one united body of Engliſhmen.

The conqueſt is indeed a great epocha in the civil hiſtory of our country, but none at all in the hiſtory of literature, the ſame darkneſs continued in the nation, and ſeems for a time to have rather increaſed. William the Conqueror was wholly employed in eſtabliſhing his authority in his newly acquired dominions, with which view he endeavoured to aboliſh the Engliſh laws, and changed the methods of proceeding in the courts of judicature. He was alſo extremely ſolicitous to bring in the general uſe of the Norman, upon the ruins of the Saxon tongue; this however he could not effect; the conſequences of which attempt was, that both languages degenerated from their orginal ſtate, and became in ſome meaſure mixed with each other.

The Saxon *Wettenagemot* was turned into the Norman parliament, and arbitrary power was bound by legal right. Stephen was elected King, on condition of reſtoring the kingdom to its liberties, aboliſhing the foreſt laws, and receiving thoſe of Edward the Confeſſor; but the ambition of the clergy, and the power of the barons, were too great for the prerogative of the King, and England became a prey to the fury of civil wars. When King John obtained the crown, he was informed by Hubert, archbiſhop of Canterbury, "That he aſcended the throne by election, and not by hereditary ſucceſſion; to the end that he might always remember, that thoſe who gave him the crown, had likewiſe the power to take it away." All the Kings from William the Conqueror ſwore to the ſtrict obſervance of the laws, though that oath was obſerved by none. John wanted to render himſelf abſolute; and his people wanted as much to preſerve their liberty: he levied ſeveral oppreſſive taxes; the Pope

Pope abſolved his ſubjects from their oath of allegiance, and the King paid a ſhameful ſubmiſſion to the papal nuncio; the barons entered into a confederacy to preſerve the conſtitution, and formally demanded the reeſtabliſhment of the laws of Edward the Confeſſor, with the removal of the charter of Henry I. The King ſwore he would never grant his ſubjects ſuch liberties, as would make himſelf a ſlave; but the barons took to their arms, and compelled the monarch to meet them in Runemead, or the mead of Council, between Staines and Windſor; where, on the fifth of June 1215, they obtained the ſacred charter of their liberties called Magna Charta, as alſo the charter of the liberties of the foreſt.

The charters are the foundation of the Engliſh liberties, and the bulwark of the Britiſh conſtitution. Some princes have imprudently attempted to break this ſacred barrier; but they found the ſpirit of the people above ſuch an innovation, and they ſuffered for their temerity. However, the bill of rights, made in conſequence of the revolution, is declaratory of thoſe liberties to which Engliſhmen are entitled, and which God grant may never be violated.

With regard to the ſtate of religion juſt before the conqueſt; although at this time many corruptions had crept into the church, and divine worſhip began to be clogged with ſuperſtitious ceremonies; yet it appears that the Britiſh church, in ſome material points, had not conformed to the errors of the Romiſh ſee.

For, firſt, both clergy and laity were required to exerciſe themſelves in reading the ſacred ſcriptures, ſinging pſalms, &c. The biſhops and teachers were recommended to the ſtudy of the Old Teſtament, according to the original Hebrew, and the New according to the oriental Greek. And though we find prayers for the dead, yet they were not in the nature of propitiation for their ſins, or to procure relaxation from their torments, but were only an honourable commemoration

guarded the subjects from arbitrary power; besides, he married the Princess Matilda, the niece of Edgar Atheling, who was the immediate heir of the line of Cerdic, whereby the Saxons and Normans considered themselves only as one united body of Englishmen.

The conquest is indeed a great epocha in the civil history of our country, but none at all in the history of literature, the same darkness continued in the nation, and seems for a time to have rather increased. William the Conqueror was wholly employed in establishing his authority in his newly acquired dominions, with which view he endeavoured to abolish the English laws, and changed the methods of proceeding in the courts of judicature. He was also extremely solicitous to bring in the general use of the Norman, upon the ruins of the Saxon tongue; this however he could not effect; the consequences of which attempt was, that both languages degenerated from their orginal state, and became in some measure mixed with each other.

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moration of their memories, and a ſacrifice of thankſgiving for their ſalvation. Purgatory was not then in the ſenſe in which it is at preſent received; and although they pretended viſions and revelations on which to found purgatory, it was held to be deſtitute of the authority of ſcripture *." And Bede likewiſe relates, that the communion was received under both kinds. Cuthbert himſelf, a little before his deceaſe, received the communion of the Lord's body and blood; and though the word maſs was frequent in this age, yet it was not known to be offered as a propitiatory ſacrifice for the quick and the dead.

There were nevertheleſs ſuch a prevalence of many of the Popiſh principles and ceremonies, that the more ſerious and diſcerning among the Engliſh began to be greatly alarmed, eſpecially as it was become a cuſtom at this time in the Roman Catholic countries to impoſe the belief of the Catholic faith, and a conformity to their ceremonies, under the ſanction of penal laws or eccleſiaſtical cenſure.

Some who were zealous for a reformation in France about this time, expoſed themſelves to great difficulty and hazard. Among theſe Berengarius, who was archdeacon of Angers in 1059, diſtinguiſhed himſelf by inveighing againſt the real preſence, who preached and propagated what he believed to be the truth, in oppoſition to the worſhip of ſaints and images, and other favourite doctrines of the church of Rome, was baniſhed. That province, and many of his adherents, were obliged to deſiſt from public worſhip, according to what they thought their duty; but as yet any other attempts to a reformation were unſucceſsful, through the overgrown power of the Romiſh church. See Dupin, Cent. XI.

* Fuller's Church Hiſtory, who cites Bede Eccleſ. Hiſt. lib. 3. cap. 5. Hiſtory of the Church of Great Britain, p. 57.

About

About this time the antient ſect of the Albigenſes, or Waldenſes, were animated with freſh vigour, to ſtand up for the truth. Theſe owe their rights to Peter Waldens, in the province of Languedoc, in the time of Pope Sylveſter, in the fourth century. Their diſcriminating tenets were, the belief of one God, or of the unity of God; baptiſm of adult believers, by dipping, faſting and abſtinence, as thoſe of Aſiatics, mentioned by Origen *. But oppoſing the doctrine of the Romiſh church, and the corrupt manners of the eccleſiaſtics, notwithſtanding their piety, drew on them ſuch perſecutions as ended in their deſtruction †.

Mr. Gerrard Brandt gives much the ſame account. He ſays, the doctrine of the Waldenſes appears to have agreed in almoſt every point, with the opinion of thoſe who, ſince the time of Luther, have declared againſt the abuſes and errors of the Romiſh church ‡. Some of them likewiſe rejected infant-baptiſm ‖ and oaths, or, as ſome think, raſh oaths only §, and all force upon conſcience; their notion being, that no man ſhould be compelled by the ſword, but won by the force of argument. The antiquity of the doctrine of the Waldenſes is acknowledged even by their greateſt enemies, in whoſe writings, among the ſlanders and contumelies which are caſt upon them, there are glorious teſtimonies of their regular life, unwearied diligence in ſearching out the truth, and fervent zeal in promoting the ſame ¶.

In England, many impoſitions on the rights of conſcience, reſpecting doctrines and ceremonies, had been rather attempted than eſtabliſhed, which created uneaſy apprehenſions in the minds of ſome ſerious and diſcerning Chriſtians, which in after times were oppoſed with Chriſtian fortitude; as will appear from the ſubſequent part of this Hiſtory.

* Contra Celſus, lib. v. Danvers's Hiſtory of the Waldenſes.
† Æneas Sylvius's Hiſtory of Bohemia, cap. xxxv.
‡ Poplin. Hiſt. Franc. Ed. 1581.
‖ Vign. p. 408. Madg. Cent. xii. Col. 833, &c.
§ Cat. Feſt. 558. Vign. p. 377. ¶ Brandt Hiſt. p. 12.

A Table of Kings and Queens of Great Britain, from 445 to 1764.

N. B. For many Years before this Period there was a confuſed Succeſſion of petty Princes, after the Romans had left Britain.

Kings of Britain.

Vortigern	445	Ambroſius	465
Vortimer	454	Prince Arthur	508

The Kingdom ſubdivided into ſeven Kingdoms, *viz.*

I. Kings of Kent.

Hengiſt	455	Lothair	673
Eſcus	488	Edrick	685
Octa	512	Withred	686
Hermanric	534	Ethelbert and Edbert	725
Ethelbert	568	Aldric	760
Edbald	616	Edbert ſtiled Pren	794
Ercembert	640	Cudred	978
Egbert	664		

II. Of the South Saxons,

including Sussex and Surry.

Ella	491	Adelwalch	548
Ciſſa	514	Anthun	588

III. Of the East Saxons,

including Essex, Middlesex and Hartfordshire.

Octa	512	Sibbi and Sigeri	665
Erchinwin	527	Sibbi alone	683
Hermanric	534	Suefrid	694
Sledda	587	Sigchard	595
Sebert	598	Offa and Withred	700
Saxred, Seward and Sigebert	616	Ceolred	709
Sigebert alone	624	Snithred	746
Sigebert II.	653	Sigered	799
Surthelm	660		

28 SE60

IV. Kings of the Saxon Heptarchy in South Britain.

Viz. Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Bedfoedshire.

East Anglia.

Uffa	575	Egrick Annas	644
Titilus	578	Adelwald	655
Ridowald	599	Aldulph	664
Erpwald	624	Alfwold	683
Sigebert I.	636	Beorna and Ethelbert	749

V. Mercia in the Midst.

Cridda	582	Ethelbald	752
Wibba	595	Offa	757
Redowald	595	Egfrid, three Months. Cenulph	
Cearlus	616	or Renulph	796
Penda	625	Kenelm and Ceodulf	819
Oſwy	657	Bernulf	821
Wolpher	659	Ludican	825
Ethelred	675	Witglaph	825
Cenred	709	Egbert	825
Ceolred	715		

VI. Northumberland.

Ida	547	Athalaric	586
Adda	559	Athelfrid	593
Glappa	566	Edwin	617
Fridulph	570	Eſrick, and Anfrid	633
Theodoric	579	Oſwald	634

Divided into two Parts, viz.

Bernicia, including Northumberland, Edinburgh, Frith.

Deira, including York, Durham, Westmorland and Cumberland.

Bernicia.

Oſwy	643	Oſulph	758
Adelwalt (Deira)	652	Adelwald	759
Egfrid	670	Alered	765
Alchfrid (Deira)	662	Ethelred	774
Alchfrid recalled		Alſwald II.	779
Ofred	705	Afred	789
Cenred	716	Ethelred in 790 reſtored	
Oſric	718	Oſbald and Ardulph	796
Ceolulph	739	Ardulph	801
Turns Monk in	736	Arſwald II.	808
Edbert	737	Andred	810

VII. Kings of Wessex or West Saxons.

Cerdic	519	Sexburga	672
Kenrick	534	Adelwalch	648
Ceaulin	560	Cenſus	672
He conquers Suſſex	591	Eſcwin and Centwin	675
Ceobric	592	Ceadwalla	686
Ceolulph	598	Ina	688
Cinigiſſil and Quicctus	611	Adelard	727
Cinigiſſil alone	636	Cudred	740
Cenowalch	643		

Egbert unites the Saxon Heptarchy, under the Name of England, A. D. 828.

Kings of England.

Egbert	828	Edward II.	975
Ethelwolf	838	Ethelred II.	978
Ethelbald	857	Edmund II. ſurnamed Ironſide	1016
Ethelbert	860	Canute the Great King of Denmark	1017
Ethelred	866		
Alfred ſurnamed the Great	872	Harold ſurnamed Harefoot	1036
Edward I.	900	Canute II. or Hardiknute	1040
Athelſtan	925	Edward III. ſurnamed the Confeſſor	1041
Edmund I.	940		
Eldred or Edred	948	Harold, 9 Months	1066
Edwy	955	William the Conqueror	1066
Edgar	959		

Kings of Scotland.

Fergus	404	Eugenius VII.	703
Eugenius I.	420	Merdacus	710
Dengardus	452	Etfinus	730
Conſtantine	457	Eugenius VIII.	761
Congallus	479	Fergus II.	764
Goran	501	Solvathius	767
Eugenius II.	535	Achaius	787
Eugenius III.	551	Congallus III.	819
Congallus II.	558	Dongallus	824
Kinathal	569	Alpinus	831
Aidan	570	Kenneth	834
Kenneth	604	Donald V.	854
Eugenius IV.	605	Conſtantine II.	858
Ferchard	622	Ethus	874
Donald	636	Gregory	875
Ferchard II.	650	Donald VI.	892
Malduinus	669	Conſtantine III.	903
Eugenius V.	688	Malcolm I.	942
Eugenius VI.	692	Indulphus	958
Amberkelethus	790	Duffas	968

Cullen

Cullen —— 972
Kenneth III. —— 977
Conſtantine IV. ſtiled the Bald — 994
Grinus —— 995
Malcolm II. — 1004
Duncan —— 1034
Macbeth —— 1040
Malcolm III. ſurnamed Canmore — 1058
Donald VII. ſurnamed Bane — 1093
Duncan II. and Donaldagair — 1094
Edgar — 1097
Alexander I. — 1107
David — 1124
Malcolm IV. — 1153
William — 1165
Alexander II. — 1215
Alexander III. — 1249
Interregnum from 1286 to the time of Robert
Robert I. — 1306
David II. —— 1329
Robert II. — 1370
Robert III. — 1390
James I. — 1406
James II. —— 1437
James III. — 1460
James IV. —— 1488
James V. — 1513
Mary — 1542
James VI. —— 1567
Who reigned 36 years, and in the 45th of Elizabeth
James I. of England, unites both the kingdoms under the name of Great Britain. 1603

The KINGS and QUEENS of ENGLAND, ſince the Conqueſt.

William I. —— 1066
William II. — 1087
Henry I. —— 1100
Stephen —— 1135

The SAXON Line reſtored.

Henry II. - - 1154
Richard I. —— 1189
John —— 1199
Henry III. — 1216
Edward I. — 1272
Edward II. — 1307
Edward III. — 1326
Richard II. —— 1377

The Line of LANCASTER.

Henry IV. —— 1399
Henry V. —— 1413
Henry VI. —— 1422

The YORK Line.

Edward IV. —— 1461
Edward V. —— 1483
Richard III. —— 1483

The Families United.

Henry VII. —— 1485
Henry VIII. —— 1509
Edward VI. —— 1547
Queen Mary — 1553
Queen Elizabeth — 1558

The Two Kingdoms United.

James I. — 1603
Charles I. — 1625
Charles II. — 1648
James II. — 1684
William and Mary 1689
Queen Anne — 1702
George I. — 1714
George II. — 1727
George III. whom God preſerve, —— 1760

CHAP. IV.

Of the State of KNOWLEDGE *and* RELIGION *in* GREAT BRITAIN, *from the Reign of* WILLIAM *the* CONQUEROR, 1066, *to the Reign of* RICHARD I.

WILLIAM, *surnamed the* Conqueror, A. D. 1066.

IF we impartially conſider the Duke of Normandy's attempt upon England, we ſhall find it difficult to determine, whether the ground of his pretenſions, the boldneſs of his undertaking, or the ſucceſs attending it, is moſt ſurpriſing: the conſequence was a dreadful anarchy of perplexity and conſternation, from different motives of intereſt, terror, and deſpair, which this deſtruction occaſioned in London. The Conqueror conſidered that the loſs of a battle might aſtoniſh, but not terrify the Engliſh; that they might have conſiderable reſources of men and arms, before he could be much reinforced from Normandy. However, he concluded to begin his march for London, in three diviſions; ordering his men, if attacked, to deſtroy the country with fire and ſword. As he approached the capital in this manner, the terrors of the people waxed ſtronger and ſtronger, and the clergy uſed all their induſtry and inſinuation to diſſuade them from making reſiſtance. But, in oppoſition to theſe perſuaſions, Morcar and Edwin, the two brothers of Harold, took an opportunity to ſally out with their party from London, thinking to find him unprepared: but they were ſo warmly received, that they retired with great precipitation; and even

even this attempt was attended with no ſmall diſadvantage, for it occaſioned his ſetting fire to ſome parts of the ſuburbs of London; ſo that at this time the nobles and prelates aſſembled at London, would no longer delay to ſeize the only opportunity they might have, to plead the merit of a voluntary ſubmiſſion. They accordingly went forth, attended by the magiſtrates of London, and meeting the Duke at the head of his troops, made a ſolemn tender of the crown: he received them with great courteſy, and, after having taken time to deliberate upon the propoſal, accepted the offer they had made, and aſſured them they would have no cauſe to repent of their choice *.

The Norman having thus acknowledged the power of election in the people of England, in deigning to receive the crown as a preſent, was immediately proclaimed King, and appointed the day for his coronation at London; and purſuant to his own deſire the ceremony was performed by Aldred archbiſhop of York; who upon that occaſion addreſſed himſelf to the Engliſh, aſſembled in great numbers, aſked if they choſe William Duke of Normandy for their King? and was anſwered in the affirmative, with loud acclamations. The biſhop of Conſtance having put the ſame queſtion to the Normans, and received the like reply, Aldred ſet the crown on his head; and then the Norman took the accuſtomed oath, importing that he would protect the church and its miniſters, govern his people with equity, enact juſt laws, and cauſe them to be punctually obſerved †.

The firſt act of ſovereignty he exerciſed after his coronation, was the ſeizure of Harold's treaſure, which he found amaſſed at Wincheſter, part of which he diſtributed among the principal officers of his army, part was given to churches and monaſteries; and a large ſhare ſent to the Pope, as a mark of his grati-

* Smollet, vol. I. p. 391. † Malmeſbury.

tude for the countenance of that pontiff, to whom he in great meaſure owed the ſucceſs of his late enterprize.

He granted a new charter to the city of London, confirming the privileges which the citizens enjoyed in the reign of Edward the Confeſſor. He preſerved the Saxon laws and conſtitution, and put the laws in force againſt robbers, who then infeſted the country; and in order to add to the ſafety of his kingdom, he built two caſtles, one at Cheſter, and the other at Stafford, which he ſtrengthened with garriſons.

The firſt act of his arbitrary power was manifeſted, in renewing the odious tax of *danegelt*, a quit-rent out of all the lands of England, wardſhips, reliefs, fines, &c. *. This occaſioned a general diſcontent through the kingdom, and made ſome inſurrections, which William very ſeverely puniſhed. After all the ſources of rebellion were quaſhed, William endeavoured to introduce the laws, cuſtoms, and language of the Normans; loading his countrymen with benefits, and oppreſſing the nobles and barons of this realm. Nor was his oppreſſions confined to the nobility, but extended alſo to the clergy, whoſe charters he violated without ſcruple; ordained that the church-lands ſhould be ſubject to military ſervice, and furniſh a certain number of horſemen: beſides, he lodged great part of his army in monaſteries. Where he could get any information of any riches hid or depoſited in them, he ordered them to be ſearched, and ſeized upon every thing that was valuable. He likewiſe depoſed Stigand, archbiſhop of Canterbury, and ſeveral other prelates, and promoted to their dignity ſtrangers from different climes, and ſome of his Norman chaplains, and ſeized on many of the abbey-lands. By theſe means he ſtrengthened his intereſt, increaſed his revenues, and made himſelf the terror of the country, where they were too weak to re-

* This was one ſhilling on every hide of land, that is, an hundred acres; but every manurer of land paid if he had but a tenth part. Rapin, vol. I. b. v. p. 141.

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ſiſt. Many of the Engliſh nobility fled to Scotland. This ſo exaſperated William, that he picked a quarrel with Malcolm King of Scotland, A. D. 1072, who was too well prepared to be immediately intimidated; both parties prepared for war, and both armies ready for action, but not eager to begin the attack. William found them well entrenched, and knew Malcolm had been trained to arms, ſo that both parties inclined to an accommodation; and on Malcolm's ſending an embaſſy to William, a peace was made on the following terms: "That the boundaries of the two nations ſhould be ſettled; that he ſhould ſwear fealty to him, or do him homage; and that William ſhould reſtore the Engliſh exiles to their eſtates.

After William had made things a little eaſy at home, he retired to Normandy, when a conſiderable revolution happened in the church. At the death of Allexander there was no ſmall diſſention in the conclave, which flamed ſo high, that two Popes were elected, viz. Hildebrand and Guibert, who were each of them acknowledged by different powers. However, the former, named Gregory VII. was recognized by the Kings of France and England; but Hildebrand was no ſooner ſettled in the chair, than he diſcovered himſelf to be a perſon of inordinate ambition and extraordinary inſolence: determined to make William pay for the countenance and favour he had ſhewn him while he was cardinal, ſoon after his return to England, he ſent one of his nuncios to him with letters, wherein he inſiſted on his doing homage to him for the kingdom of England, as a fief of the Roman ſee, and demanded the arrears of Rome Scot, which had not been paid for ſome years.

The anſwer which William made to this inſolent demand, was worthy of the King of England. He refuſed to do fealty to the Pope, and ſtrengthened his refuſal, by appealing to the conduct of his anceſtors, who

who had never left him a precedent. The following is a tranſlation of the original *.

"To the moſt excellent Gregory, paſtor of the holy church, William, by the grace of God, King of England, and Duke of Normandy, ſendeth, greeting. Hubert, your nuncio, coming unto me in your behalf, adviſed me to do fealty to you and your ſucceſſors, and to take more care in making good the payments of money, which my predeceſſors uſed to remit to the church of Rome. One of theſe I have conſented to, but have refuſed the other. As for fealty, it is what I never have done, nor will do; becauſe I neither obliged myſelf to perform it by any promiſe made by myſelf, nor do I find my predeceſſors ever performed it to yours. As for the money, it was collected in a very bad manner, for almoſt three years, during my abſence in France. But now I am, by God's mercy, returned to my kingdom, I have ſent by the nuncio above-mentioned, what is already collected: as for the remainder, it ſhall be ſent, when convenient, by the legate of Lanfranc, our truſty archbiſhop. We beg your prayers for ourſelves, and the welfare of our kingdom, having born a great regard for your predeceſſors, and being deſirous of approving our affections and obedience to you above all others."

And although this politic Prince was thus complimentarily courteous to the Pope, yet he retained the ancient cuſtom of inveſting biſhops and abbots, by delivering them a ring, and a ſtaff, whereby, without more ado, they were put into plenary poſſeſſion of the power and the profits of their benefice; for he always declared he would keep the paſtoral ſtaves in his own hands. Nor would the King ſuffer any in his dominions to acknowledge the biſhop of Rome for apoſtolical without his command, or to receive the Pope's letters, except they were firſt ſhewn unto him; nor did the King permit the biſhops to paſs ſentence of excommuni-

* Selden, p. 1631.

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cation againſt any of his barons or officers, although it was for the commiſſion of the moſt heinous crimes, except leave was firſt had and obtained from the King. However, the King did grant to the biſhops the juriſdiction in religious matters, and the grant of tithes, as well ſmall as great.

The King likewiſe made an act for the uniformity of the liturgy, which was to be regulated by that then in uſe at Saliſbury, compoſed by Oſmond biſhop of that ſee.

About this time the King had conteſts with the Welch and the Scotch; he levied a numerous army, and marched with reſolution to chaſtiſe and reduce them to obedience. The peace being ſettled, he turned his mind to putting his finances in a condition to ſupply all his neceſſities; and in this no prince, perhaps, had ever greater penetration or invention than he diſcovered in the various means made uſe of for this end, eſpecially as he ſtuck at nothing he judged ſubſervient to this point, on which his ſafety ſo much depended. The Saxons were already fleeced to gratify his avarice, the Normans were grown opulent by their ſpoils; and as they had for a conſiderable time enjoyed the benefit of his government, he thought it but juſt they ſhould pay their ſhare towards its ſupport; and that he might know what impoſitions they could bear, he ordered an eſtimate to be taken of all the lands in his kingdom. Commiſſioners were appointed, who had a right to make inqueſt, upon oath, upon or near the premiſſes, of the extent and value of the arable, meadow, and paſture land, every individual had. This ſurvey was no leſs than ſix years in making, and was contained in two books. This regiſter was ſometimes called the roll of Wincheſter, becauſe it was depoſited there. It was alſo named Domboc, which name was not given it becauſe it decides any dubious matters, but becauſe it is illegal to depart or appeal from its deciſions. It is now called DOMESDAY-BOOK.

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This scheme succeeded so well, that persons of all ranks were included, and the value of their estates pretty well known, so as to receive a proportionable taxation. The next year, which was 1084, was remarkable for nothing so much as the oppressive tax of six shillings upon every hide of land throughout his kingdom. Whether avarice or policy might have given rise for this oppression, is very uncertain. He applied part of it for building the Tower of London. The disaffection and jealousies, it occasioned, are much better conceived than described. It was very natural for him to fear the resentment of his subjects, if any opportunity presented. An invasion of the Danes indeed soon after happened; but the English did not care to join them, and it was soon suppressed: however, it pleased God at length to put a stop to his tyrannical reign; for he went to Normandy, A. D. 1087, and died, occasioned by a fall from his horse.

From the transactions of William's reign, he appears to have been a prince of great courage, capacity, and ambition, politic, cruel, vindictive and rapacious, stern and haughty in his deportment, reserved and jealous in his disposition; but though sudden and impetuous in his enterprises, he was cool and indefatigable in time of danger and difficulty. A late ingenious author calls him a *glorious tyrant*; an epithet I shall leave my readers to judge of its propriety.

William II. *surnamed* Rufus, A. D. 1087.

The Conqueror was succeeded by William, his second son, called Rufus, from his ruddy complexion, who owed his elevation to that dignity, to Langfranc, archbishop of Canterbury. Some opposition was indeed agitated, and the nation seemed to be in some commotion; but Langfranc wisely advised him to conciliate the affections of the English: and he accordingly amused them with magnificent promises to ease them

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of their burthenſome tolls and taxes, and allow them the free liberty of hunting. Cajoled by theſe profeſſions, which were void of all ſincerity, the Engliſh adhered to his intereſt; and the Londoners raiſed an army of 30,000 men for his ſervice. But it was not long after, when William began to ſhow ſo much of his father's diſpoſition, as even to procure a new ſurvey of many of the lands in England, and laid heavier taxes upon them. By this and other methods, which diſcovered his rapacious diſpoſition, great conteſts enſued both in Scotland and Wales. A treaty was however brought about, and peace concluded, with Malcolm of Scotland: but William by his inſolence and perfidy ſoon broke the treaty; and when Malcolm ſent ambaſſadors, demanding the performance of the articles in the late treaty, he deſired the Scottiſh King to come in perſon, to his court at Glouceſter, where he ſhould have juſtice done him. Accordingly he came, where he was treated very imperiouſly, and was told he muſt ſubmit the affair to the deciſion of the Engliſh peers. Malcolm rejecting this, returned to his own country; and, glowing with indignation, forthwith aſſembled an army, and invaded Northumberland, which he ravaged as far as Alnwick; when he had ſo far reduced the gariſon, that the governor demanded a capitulation, on pretence of preſenting him the keys on the point of his ſpear, thruſt his weapon into his eye, and killed him on the ſpot.

But this is contradicted by Aderic. Vital. Eccleſ. Hiſt. l. 8. p. 701. who ſays that Malcolm was ſurprized under the ſecurity of a treaty, and unexpectedly attacked by Molbray *.

Rufus being freed from a powerful enemy, in the perſon of Malcolm, he turned his thoughts to invading his brother Robert's dominions in Normandy; which neither was for the credit nor the advantage of William.

* Collier's Eccleſ. Hiſt. vol. I. p. 265.

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About this time Langfranc, archbiſhop of Canterbury, dying, William the King ſeized the profits of the ſee into his own hands, and kept the church vacant for ſome years, as likewiſe the biſhoprics of Wincheſter and Durham, and appropriated the profits of thirteen abbeys to his own uſe; by which means he brought immenſe treaſure into his exchequer, and all benefices which he parted with was upon the preſent payment of large ſums *.

About the year A. D. 1088 began the holy war, and Robert Duke of Normandy, to fit himſelf for ſuch an important expedition, ſold his dukedom for ten thouſand marks, to his brother William. To pay this money, King Rufus laid a grievous tax over all the realm; extorting it with ſuch ſeverity, that the monks were obliged to ſell their church-plate, and even their chalices; and when the clergy deſired to be eaſed of their burdens, he bid them ſearch for their coffins of gold and ſilver, and dead mens bones.

At this time there was a contention at Rome between two Popes, Urban and Clement III. Rufus took part with Clement; but Anſelm acknowledged Urban, and deſired of the King leave to fetch his pall off Urban: all the reſt of the biſhops were againſt him; mean while the King had ſent two meſſengers to the Pope, for the pall; who returned with the Pope's legate, with the pall, to be given to Anſelm: this legate ſo far perſuaded the King, that he acknowledged Urban for Pope. But upon his delivering Anſelm the archbiſhop's pall, thereby making void the inveſtiture he received from King William, and obliging him afterward to acknowledge his right of inveſtiture, it gave great diſpleaſure to the King; whereupon he expelled Anſelm his kingdom, confiſcated the lands of the archbiſhopric, and declared that his biſhops did and ſhould hold their ſees of him, independent of the Pope. Anſelm compromiſed this affair

* Hiſtory of the Church of Great Britain, p. 39.

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by the intervention of friends: upon which he returned to England; but was ſo zealous for maintaining and propagating the opinion of the Pope's ſole right of inveſtiture, that he was again obliged to fly from the kingdom.

William the Conqueror having rendered the new Foreſt in Hants, by his devaſtation of towns and churches, a wilderneſs for men, and a paradiſe for deer; King Rufus went there on a party of pleaſure, when the King was ſlain by the glance of an arrow, ſhot by Sir Walter Tirrell.

Thus fell William, after the reign of thirteen years, during which he oppreſſed his people in every form of tyranny and inſult. He was equally void of learning, principles and humanity; haughty, paſſionate, profligate and ungrateful; a ſcoffer at religion, a ſcourge to the clergy, vain-glorious, rapacious and diſſolute, and an inveterate enemy to the Engliſh, though he owed his crown to their valour and fidelity; when the Normans attempted to deprive him of the crown, ſcarce poſſeſſed of one ſingle virtue, to compenſate for his vices; and, in the words of the celebrated Mr. Pope, DAMNED TO EVERLASTING FAME.

HENRY I. *ſurnamed* BEAUCLERK, A. D. 1100.

Henry, the youngeſt ſon of the Conqueror (ſurnamed Beauclerk, which ſignifies a good ſcholar) ſucceeded to the crown, though, had his brother been in England at the time of Rufus's death, the Engliſh ſeemed more biaſſed in his favour, and he would probably have acceded to the crown. However, circumſtances favoured Henry's advancement to the throne, though not without ſome tumultuous oppoſition at the election, and he was immediately proclaimed King. And as the people had too much reaſon during the two laſt reigns, to think that a King is very apt to diſregard his coronation-oath, Henry, for the farther ſatisfaction

tisfaction of his subjects, granted the same day a charter, confirming their privileges, and redressing some greivances under which they laboured. By this deed, which was authenticated in the most solemn manner, and transcribed into a great number of copies, dispersed all over the kingdom, he established the churches in possession of all their immunities, and exempted them from all the hardships they had sustained from the tyranny of Rufus, especially that of being kept vacant for the King's use, and afterwards put up to public sale, without any regard to merit or capacity. He abolished the excessive fines which used to be exacted from the heirs of noblemen for the livery of their lands; permitted the natives in general to dispose of their children in marriage, according to their own pleasure, without paying for a licence from the crown. He suppressed the duty of moneyage, paid once in three years, in consideration of the King's preserving the coins unaltered. He remitted all fines, mulcts, and debts in the exchequer, arising from vexatious prosecutions; allowed the barons to bequeathe their personal estates; exempted the lands possessed by the military tenants of the crown from gelds, talliages and benevolences; restored the laws of Edward III. relative to murders, thefts, &c. and forgave all rapine and depredation committed to that time, on condition the offenders would make immediate restitution.

In pursuance of the same laudable scheme of reformation and redress, he expelled from court all the ministers and instruments of his brother's debauchery and arbitrary power, and published a severe edict against delinquents and adulterers; he abolished the odious curfew, requiring every man at the ring of a bell at eight o'clock to put out his fire.

As Henry had been greatly obliged to the citizens of London in his acquisition of the crown, he gratified them with another charter of very ample privileges; and, in order to crown the satisfaction of the people, he recalled

called Anſelm, archbiſhop of Canterbury, who was become exceeding popular in England through the influence of the monks. The prelate accepted the invitation with tranſport, and ſoon after landed at Dover; but the King was greatly diſappointed when he found that Anſelm refuſed to do him homage, adhering to the canons of the council of Bari, which forbad eccleſiaſtics to receive inveſtitures from the laity, or to pay them homage on any account; and the conditions of their living together in a good underſtanding were, that the king ſhould relinquiſh the prerogative of inveſting biſhops and abbots, and pay an implicit obedience to the Pope. Henry, though ſhocked at the inſolent propoſals of this arrogant prieſt, who wanted to curtail his authority, was forced to temporize. For about this time his brother Robert aſſerts his claim to the Engliſh crown, and if Anſelm's intereſt were to have been thrown in that ſcale, it might preponderate on that ſide; and even, notwithſtanding, the king's moderation, when Robert his brother made a deſcent at Portſmouth, he found the people's mind fluctuating, and the King was obliged to depend, in ſome meaſure, on the eloquence and intereſt of Anſelm, to preſerve peace and loyalty to his majeſty; ſo that at length affairs were compromiſed. Henry now proceeded with rigour againſt many of the nobles who had promoted the invaſion by his brother: ſome were baniſhed, their eſtates ſeized, &c. while he rewarded others for their zealous attachment to his royal perſon.

But all the nobles in the land were more eaſily managed than the archbiſhop of Canterbury, who was a true monk and bigot to the church of Rome. For his deſign was to accompliſh two projects: the firſt was to eſtabliſh celibacy among eccleſiaſtics; (Anſelm called a council at Weſtminſter, where firſt he excommunicated all married prieſts, though half the clergy at that time were married;) and the ſecond, to hinder biſhops and abbots from receiving the inveſtiture of

their benefices from the King. The Pope had given his orders for inſiſting upon the execution of the canons againſt lay inveſtiture; nevertheleſs, the King refuſed to part with his prerogative, and Anſelm refuſed to conſecrate the biſhops whom Henry had appointed. This produced a quarrel, which at length Anſelm reſolved to go and lay before Pope Paſcal II. A. D. 1103; and he was accompanied by ſome biſhops, who had quitted their benefices, rather than acknowlege the King's ſupremacy; and the King ſent two ambaſſadors at the ſame time to defend his cauſe. But notwithſtanding their remonſtrance the Pope remained inflexible, and would not make any conceſſions, though he wrote a letter to the King in mild terms, telling him, "He ſhould be glad to oblige him in any thing that was conſiſtent with juſtice; that he had no deſign of incroaching upon his prerogative; but the granting the right of inveſtiture to a layman was not in his power, as it was an eſſential property of church-government."

The King was not well pleaſed with the Pope's anſwer, and ordered his ambaſſadors to acquaint Anſelm, that he did not deſire to ſee him in England, unleſs he was reſolved to conform to the example of his predeceſſors.

Whilſt Henry was abroad in Normandy, he received an expoſtulatory letter from the Pope, by the hand of Anſelm, and the King allowed him to return to England.

When Anſelm arrived here, he was received very joyfully; and repairing to Canterbury with the pall in a ſilver box, the archbiſhop went bare-footed to meet him, attended by all the monks of St. Auguſtine and Chriſt-church.

A legate was likewiſe ſent by Pope Henorius II. to go to England and Scotland in the quality of legate *à latere*, and on his arrival was received by the archbiſhop of Canterbury with all the honours due to his character. The legate being commiſſioned to enquire into

into the diſſentions between the archbiſhop of York and the Scotch prelates, who refuſed to acknowledge his primacy, went to Roxburgh, where he held a conference with David, King of Scotland, on that ſubject. On his return, he preſided at a general convocation of the prelates and clergy, where, to ſhew his authority, he was ſeated on an eminence above the ſeats of the archbiſhops and temporal lords, who attended the council, which was very diſagreeable to many of the Engliſh, and the council ended with no important advantages.

We might enlarge in the hiſtory of the reign of Henry I. by a variety of tranſactions of a civil nature; but as that is not my province, ſhall conclude with only obſerving, that he died of a fever, A. D. 1135, and ſhall ſum up his character in a few words. He was too fond of foreigners, too vindictive to his enemies, too ſenſible to be an enthuſiaſt, too cautious to be ſurpriſed, too valiant to be conquered, too good to deſerve the calumnies caſt on him by the monks, and too bad to be generally applauded.

STEPHEN, A. D. 1135.

Stephen aſcending the throne, after being elected, rather by a cabal of prelates and noblemen, than by a general conſent of the nation, reſolved to ſecure the favour of the nation by ſome extraordinary conceſſions; and therefore over and above his promiſe of ruling with equity and moderation, he ſolemnly ſwore that he would not retain vacant ſees and benefices in his hands, but fill them immediately with perſons canonically elected; that he would not diſturb the clergy or laity in the enjoyment of their woods; that he would not ſue any perſon for hunting in the royal foreſt; that he would never exact the tax of danegelt. The Engliſh were ſo credulous as to believe he would pay a greater regard to it, than was evident from his future conduct. However, partly through his own

treachery and miſconduct, his whole reign was a ſcene of war and conteſt, both abroad and at home. We meet with very few tranſactions relative to learning or religion. There were however many religious foundations built and endowed in the troubleſome reign of King Stephen; as the monaſtery of St. Mary de Pratis, founded by Robert, Earl of Leiceſter; the hoſpital of St. Catherine, near London, founded by Maud, wife of King Stephen; and St. Stephen's chapel at Weſtminſter, founded by himſelf; as alſo the Ciſtertian monaſtry at Feverſham, with an hoſpital near the Weſt-gate at York, &c.

He died after a ſhort illneſs in 1154. His character is that of humane and generous: he ſeems to have been poſſeſſed of many great qualities; and, had he lived in happier times, he might probably have been reckoned one of the moſt illuſtrious monarchs that ever filled the Engliſh throne.

Henry II. A. D. 1154.

Henry came to the crown with an indiſputable title. He was a prince, wiſe, valiant, and generally fortunate. Soon after his acceſſion to the throne, he choſe a privy-council of clergy and temporality, and refined the common laws. He parcelled England into ſix diviſions, and appointed three judges to every circuit. He eraſed many of the caſtles to the ground, as he found they were held by perſons in a kind of independence of the crown, and derogatory to the anthority of it. Theſe regulations ſeem firſt and principally to engroſs his attention, but he afterwards found others to demand his concern. The groſs impoſitions of the Pope highly threatened the diminution of his royal prerogatives; ſo that he diſclaimed the Pope's authority, refuſed to pay Peter-pence, and interdicted all appeals to Rome. But he only, or chiefly, regarded his temporal prerogatives; for had not they been invaded

vaded by the prelates, under the direction of the Pope, they might have continued their influence in the church in all ſpiritual affairs. However, the King was not ſufficiently upon his guard in the choice of his favourites.

Thomas Becket, doctor of canon law, was, by the King, made chancellor of England; and four years after he was, by the King, made archbiſhop of Canterbury; and this, in proceſs of time, proved highly prejudicial to his majeſty's authority. One of the firſt matters of diſpute was, that the King having commanded that juſtice ſhould be impartially executed upon all men in his court, Becket inſiſted on the clergy being exempt from the juriſdiction of the civil magiſtrate, and judged in the eccleſiaſtical court. This incenſed the King againſt him. To adjuſt matters of importance, the King called a parliament at Clarenden, to confirm the antient laws and cuſtoms; to which Becket and the reſt of the biſhops conſented, and ſubſcribed to them; but Becket afterwards recanting, renounced the ſame.

The ſame year, A. D. 1160, the King required that the law ſhould be put in execution for ſome crimes committed by the clergy, which the archbiſhop would not permit; and, without the King's knowledge, determined to repair to Rome and lay the affair before the Pope. And this was a matter of debate for ſome years.

Matthew Paris recites a variety of letters between this Pope and the King, and between the Pope and the King of France. By the mediation of the latter, Becket had leave to return to England; however the King ſtill retained his temporal authority.

Upon Becket's return to England, he excommunicated ſeveral Biſhops. The next year he excommunicated lord Sackville, who had been appointed by the King vicar of the church of Canterbury, as he had derogated,

derogated, as he called it, from the rights of the church to please the King.

The King being then in Normandy, complained greatly, to some of his domestics, of the insolent behaviour of Becket, whom he had raised from abject circumstances to such dignity, and yet by such unparalleled ingratitude became the continual disturber of his government. Authors vary greatly in their conjectures, and history affords us nothing certain with respect to the motives of the persons who came over to assassinate Becket. Whether they were incited to it by the King, and received any promises of reward for so rash an action; or whether they were animated by principle only, and a regard to the tranquillity of the nation; be this as it will, William de Tracy, Reginald Fitzurse, Hugh de Moreville, and Richard Brito, mutually engaged to revenge the King's quarrel. They withdrew from court, and taking shipping at different ports, arrived in England, and met at the castle of Saltwode, within six miles of Canterbury. The next day they went to Canterbury, and advanced to Becket's apartment, where they warmly expostulated with him about the rashness and insolence of his conduct in his station as chancellor, and more especially as archbishop; which making no impression upon him, it is said, they retired to put on their armour, and soon returned to execute the assassination, which they did with many circumstances of cruelty.

Collier says *, "That, upon the news of the archbishop's death, the King and the people were extremely troubled; though it may be easily conjectured to proceed from different motives. The King was apprehensive that the archbishop's murder would occasion reflection and dishonour to his highness; and so, in fact, it did soon. The King of France wrote to his holiness, in which he made no scruple to charge him as culpable in that act; and intimated, that the Pope should

* Collier's Eccles. Hist. vol. I. p. 375.

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draw St. Peter's ſword againſt King Henry, and even to think of ſome new and exemplary puniſhment for a crime in which the univerſal church was concerned. This was likewiſe followed with another from the Earl of Blois, and another from the archbiſhop of Sens, in which he moves for an interdict upon his dominions.

King Henry proteſted his innocence, and ſent an embaſſy to Rome, upon his arrival in England, about that time, to compromiſe matters; and either from a conſciouſneſs of his fault, or motives of policy, agreed to purchaſe his abſolution upon very ſevere terms. The Pope enjoined him to ſuffer appeals from England to Rome; to quit his right and claim to inveſtitures; to keep 200 men in arms for the holy war; and to pay forty thouſand marks of ſilver, and five thouſand of gold. Some add, that he ſubmitted to ſtrip himſelf naked at Canterbury, and to be laſhed by divers monks, ſome of whom gave him five, others three ſtripes. This was in A. D. 1170, and the Pope canonized Becket for a ſaint.

During this reign, a conſiderable number of Germans came over to England, to attempt a reformation from ſome of the groſs errors of Popery. Authors differ as to their number. The ſentiments and character of theſe men but agree in this, that they were ſeverely treated, by branding them with hot irons, and by other methods of cruelty; ſome were even put to death, which they bore with great fortitude.

The reign of Henry abounds with many acts which redound to his honour, notwithſtanding his foibles, which derogate from it. He was educated with high notions of the kingly prerogative, for which he manifeſted the moſt inviolable attachment; and he guarded the liberties of his ſubjects by many excellent laws and regulations. So that, upon the whole, he is ranked among the moſt powerful and illuſtrious of the Engliſh monarchs.

End of the FIRST VOLUME.

N. B. As the ſubjects of the INTRODUCTION are various, and of an intereſting nature, I find it will take more than two numbers: for which reaſon I have begun it in the laſt half-ſheet of this, and ſhall finiſh it in the tenth number, which completes VOL. I.

The next volume will begin with the reign of RICHARD I. In which, and the ſubſequent reigns to the time of the Reformation, the exorbitant claims of the Romiſh Church, and the prevailing errors of that religion, amply evince the neceſſity of a reformation; which, with the progreſs of it, abroad and at home, will come under conſideration.

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